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**FACTORS OF THE
IRANIAN ISLAMIC
REVOLUTION OF 1979**

**by
Daniel B. Staudinger**

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty
of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts**

**Institute of Islamic Studies
McGill University
Montreal**

November 1990



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ABSTRACT

Title: Factors of the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979
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This thesis will deal with the question of how the Āyatullāh Khomeynī and his militant clerical supporters captured the forces of the revolution in Iran and became the supreme authority of the Islamic Republic. This accomplishment is particularly noteworthy in light of the fact that the revolution involved virtually every segment of the population, and further that the principal ideologists were men such as 'Alī Shari'atī and Jalāl 'Alī 'Aḥmad rather than Khomeynī. The common need to put an end to the Pahlavī dictatorship united very diverse groups into a broad coalition spanning a whole range of religious, ideological, ethnic, and class interests. Shortly after the fall of the Pahlavī régime, however, that coalition began to crumble. Although the various elements had been united in their goal of the downfall of the Shah's government, they had quite diverse ideas on what type of system should take its place. During and after the revolution, Khomeynī and the radical clerical forces which supported him moved to consolidate their hold on the country--riding the wave of Khomeynī's popularity--, suppressing all opposition, and establishing the Islamic Republic.

RÉSUMÉ

Titre: Les facteurs de la révolution islamique Iranienne de 1979.

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Cette thèse concerne la question de comment l'Āyatullāh Khumaynī et son clergé militant ont parvenus à capturer les forces de la révolution en Iran et sont devenus l'autorité suprême de la République Islamique. Cet accomplissement est particulièrement important à cause du fait que la révolution a impliquée virtuellement toute les parties de la population et que les idéologues principaux étaient des hommes tel que 'Alī Sharī'atī et Jalāl 'Alī 'Aḥmad au lieu de Khumaynī. Le besoin commun de mettre un fin à la dictature des Pahlavī a unis des groupes très divers dans une vaste coalition couvrant une grande gamme d'intérêts religieux, idéologiques, ethniques, et social. Cependant, peu de temps après le fin du régime Pahlavī, la coalition commença à s'écrouler. Bien que les éléments divers avaient été unis dans leur but de mettre un fin au gouvernement du Shah, ils avaient des idées très diverses au sujet du système qui aurait du le remplacer. Pendant et après la révolution, Khumaynī et le clergé radical qui le supportait ont consolidés leur pouvoir sur le pays--portés par une vague de popularité envers Khumaynī--, supprime toutes opposition, et établit la République Islamique.

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NOTE ON transliteration

The system of transliteration employed in this thesis is that adopted by the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. Vowels of Arabic and Persian words are transliterated as written rather than pronounced. Constructions such as marāji`-i are spelled with a simple idāfah rather than as marāji`-yi. Words such as Shah, Islam, and Iran have become sufficiently common in English usage so as not to require diacritical marks. Common nouns are italicized, but proper names are not, with place names spelled in their most usual Anglicized forms. Diacritical marks are retained for the sake of uniformity when English nominal endings are added. The use of broken plurals has been avoided, except for commonly understood ones, such as `ulamā'. Otherwise plurals have been constructed by adding an 's' to the Arabic or Persian singulars, the 's' not being italicized--e.g., mujtahids, imāms. The vowel of the Arabic definite articles has been given the value 'u' in Persian names and words such as Ayatullah. The `ayn has been represented by the reversed apostrophe (``). The hamza is denoted by the apostrophe (').

In the notes and bibliography, the names of non-Western individuals appear as they are spelled in the works cited.

INTRODUCTION

Importance of the Iranian Revolution

The Iranian revolution was a momentous event in world affairs with far-reaching consequences--internationally, regionally, and within Iran itself. It completely shook up the old political order, from the states of the Middle East to the Superpowers, breaking Iran's old alliances and leaving it relatively isolated. Complicating this change still further was the combative stance it assumed in relation to other states, not only Iraq, by threatening to export its holy war and revolution anywhere it feels is not in line with its definition of Islam.

Hamid Algar has stated that the Iranian Revolution was a movement aimed at the triumph of the oppressed over their oppressors, with the Constitution providing a basis for continuation of the revolution "at home and abroad." Their stated goal, in their external relations, was to spread the revolution to all oppressed peoples to form "a single world community."¹

The Islamic Republic's military was to be not only the guardian of the country, but an instrument "for fulfilling the ideological mission of jihad in God's path; that is, extending the sovereignty of God's law throughout the world."²

Iran, on the eve of the revolution, was of major importance strategically, both in regional and world politics and in economics. The revolution changed the strategic alliances and balance of power in the gulf region. The powerful American

influence in Iran ended along with Iran's position as guarantor of stability in the region. Iran was the major player in the U.S. effort to stop Soviet expansionism in the Gulf, since it shared a long border with the Soviet Union, and its regional military role secured the Straits of Hormuz, the gateway for almost 40 per cent of the non-communist world's oil.³ The revolution contributed directly to the subsequent Iran-Iraq war, as well as aiding the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan--by the removal of the gulf's "policeman."⁴

The blow that the overthrow of the Shah dealt to U.S. interests, removing Iran as a major player in the U.S. global and regional power network, cannot be overstated.

Henry Kissinger has called the loss of Iran the "greatest single blow to U.S. foreign policy interests since World War II." U.S. interests were not speculative, nor did Iran represent a lowly domino standing in the way of world Communist domination. Iran was the linchpin of U.S. control of the Persian Gulf and its hedge against a Middle Eastern oil cutoff, its center of operations for surveillance of the southern part of the Soviet Union, a balance to Arab interests in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a third party supplier of oil to South Africa, the largest buyer of U.S. military goods and external subsidizer of U.S. military research and development, and a testing ground for U.S. military and para-military operations for use elsewhere around the globe. In short, the overthrow of the Shah spelled the end of a major epoch of bipartisan U.S. foreign policy dating back to the Truman administration.⁵

The revolution was particularly disturbing to the U.S. because it was powerless to stop it, including the embassy seizure. Furthermore, this key player fell to a government not only nationalistic and anti-American, but also "Islamic" and led by a seemingly irrational "holy man" inimical to U.S. interests.⁶

The Islamic face of the revolution sparked interest throughout the Muslim world in the power of the people, using the sword of Islam, to throw off the fetters of foreign influence and autocratic government and to begin to realize the ideal of an Islamic state. However, the fear that the revolution would spread to other countries of the region has proven largely exaggerated, stemming as it did from certain specific Iranian conditions--historical, cultural, and religious traditions--and, therefore, not easily exportable. These specific conditions will be examined in detail elsewhere.

Developments in Iran are important, as well, because they serve as a model for understanding the difficult doctrinal and practical problems and possible solutions involved in implementing an Islamic system of government. Other countries, especially Pakistan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, have experimented with Islamic legal codes and government and economic institutions, but the changes have not been so comprehensive.⁷

Internally, the revolution radically changed the whole political, social, and economic structure of the country. The centuries-old monarchy was replaced by a republic, the secular state by a "quasi-theocracy." Much of the economy was taken from private hands by the government. There was a new bureaucratic and military élite. Half-a-million Iranians--mostly middle classes and professionals--left the country; thousands were executed in the revolution; thousands died in the Kurdish rebellion, and the human toll in the war with Iraq was staggering.⁸

It is important to investigate how, in this one instance, the 'ulamā'--who had held a definite place in society under the Shah--came to exercise political power, while everywhere else they are relatively powerless. One of the questions that will be examined is to what degree this was an 'Islamic' revolution. And we will find out how a revolution which found its genesis and impetus in a broad cross-section of individuals, organizations, and ideologies came to be dominated, not even by the 'ulamā' as a whole, but by a faction under the leadership of one member of the religious class, Āyatullāh Ruhollāh Khumaynī.

The factors and events leading to the revolution, providing much of the basis for what followed, will be examined. Chapter I will examine the roots of the revolution in the historical context: the importance of Ithnā'asharī Shī'ī Islam, tracing certain motivating characteristics for the 'ulamā's involvement in politics--doctrinal, historical and social. Chapter II will deal with political, social, economic, and religious discontent under Muḥammad Rizā Shah--the more immediate catalyst for the revolution. The various forces of opposition examined will shed light on the issues of to what degree this was an 'Islamic' revolution in general and 'Khumaynī's' revolution in particular. Chapter III looks at the revolution and the founding of the Islamic Republic--the consolidation of Khumaynī's and his radical supporters' hold on government--, including such key issues as the proper form of government in Shī'ī Islam, the Constitution, and the principle of vilāyat-i faqīh. This chapter will also look

at the opposition to Khomeyni's faction and the Islamic Republic, to shed further light on the questions of how widespread was his support, to what extent this was an 'Islamic' revolution, and how he came to dominate it.

NOTES

¹Hamid Algar, trans., Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980), p. 19.

²Ibid., p. 22.

³Jennifer Darling, "The American Press & the Role of Islam in the Iranian Revolution: A Study of Editorial Perceptions in Five Daily Newspapers." (Master's Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1982), p. 1.

⁴Shaul Bakhash, The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution (New York: Basic Books, 1984), p. 4.

⁵David H. Albert, "The Text and Subtexts of the Iranian Revolution," in Tell the American People, Perspectives on the Iranian Revolution (Philadelphia: Movement for a New Society, [1980]), p. 8.

⁶Darling, p. 2.

⁷Bakhash, p. 5.

⁸Ibid., p. 4.

CHAPTER I

ROOTS OF THE REVOLUTION, THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN IRAN, MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR THE IRANIAN 'ulamā's INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS: DOCTRINAL, HISTORICAL, SOCIAL

Islam, since its establishment, has emphasized the coextensiveness of religion and politics. This fact alone could provide some basis for the involvement of the religious class in politics, although this has not been the case in the absence of other factors. This is particularly important in Ithnā'asharī Shī'ī Islam, and especially so in the case of Iran for reasons which the following discussion will point out.

The role of Ithnā'asharī Shī'ī Islam, and especially its clerical class, the Iranian 'ulamā', is of particular importance in the study of the Iranian revolution. Over 80 per cent of Iran's population belong to Ithnā'asharī or Imāmī Shī'ism. Thus, we have the unusual case of the Shī'ah being a minority sect in the world Islamic community vis-à-vis the majoritarian ahl al-Sunnah, but the dominant sect in Iran, having become the official religion of the state under the ruling Safavid dynasty (1501-1722).

THE ITHNĀ'ASHARĪ THEORY OF LEGITIMATE RULE

Of primary importance to the understanding of Shī'ī juristic

and political theory is the institution of the Imāmate.¹ It is a concept vastly different in definition from Sunnī Islam--referring, in some basic sense, to the succession to rule by descendants of Muhammad through the line of his cousin and son-in-law, 'Alī.² But although both Sunnī and Shī'ī concepts originate out of the fundamental problem of the succession, their perceptions of the imām's qualities, and source of his authority, differ drastically. The Sunni concept of the imām or the khalīfah is the

deputy of the lawgiver [the Prophet] to preserve the religion; hence he induces the people to perform what God commanded, and he is the head of the sovereignty in judicial, administrative and military matters. However, he does not have any legislative power.³

That is, he is no more than deputy to the Prophet in administering the religious and worldly life of the community.

The Ithnā'asharī Shī'ī concept, however, states that the Imamate is a divine office which the Imām holds by divine appointment. The Imām is the infallible agent of God, divinely appointed through the intermediary of the Prophet to guide and rule over the Muslim community,⁴ that is, he wields both political leadership and religious authority.⁵ In Shī'ī doctrine, the Imām is the only legitimate ruler, and obedience to his rule (walāyah) "is the primary duty of the believer, after belief in God and the Prophet."⁶

A tradition related by the eighth Imam, 'Alī al-Riḍā, explains many important points about the office--the Imām's special status as infallible viceregent of God; blessed and

chosen by God, not the people, for his role. That tradition declares that the Imām has the status of the prophets, implying that the prophets are also included in the scope of imāmah. The legatees (al-awṣiyā')--Ithnā'asharī Shī'ism states that there are one for each prophet--share that position with the prophets by inheritance. The Imām is the viceregent of God and the Prophet--not only representing and carrying on the Prophet's mission, but being also a representative of God on earth. The Imām has authority over religion and the lives of Muslims in all respects, to see to its, and their, perfection. He also has an important position in relation to the sharī'ah; he "allows that which God has permitted and forbids that which God has forbidden," implying that he alone can interpret and implement the sharī'ah in the correct manner. He attained this role, not by his own effort, but as a gift from God, and was given all of the knowledge and wisdom necessary to fulfill it.⁷

This is unlike the Sunnī concept of khalīfa because the Sunnī khalīfah is subject to the sharī'ah and his role with respect to it is not a decisive one.⁸ It is important to note that although Ithnā'asharī Shī'īs include the prophet as well as his deputies in the scope of imāmah--according to their concept that it is universal divine leadership--, they distinguish between the imām and the prophet. Whereas imāmah can be attributed to the prophet, prophecy (nubūwah) cannot be attributed to the imām. And although they give the imām a universal and divine position, their theological arguments

indicate that the term usually refers to the true viceregents of the Prophet--'Alī and his descendants. In light of this discussion, Yunus seems to draw a suitable definition of the imām as he who

possesses the universal leadership in religious and worldly [matters] by fundamental right in [this] world, acting in place of (niyābatān 'an) the Prophet [Muḥammad], peace be upon him.⁹

The Shī'ite principle of 'legitimate rule' has been used by some scholars to explain the oppositional role of the Iranian 'ulamā in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁰ In examining this issue, there are two very different historical perspectives to consider: the periods before and after the occultation of the twelfth Imam. In Ithnā'asharī Shī'ī Islam, there have been twelve Imāms, beginning with 'Alī and ending with the occultation, in 874 A.D., of the twelfth, Muḥammad al-Mahdi, who, it is believed, will return to end evil in the world.¹¹ The majority of early Muslims did not support the Ithnā'asharī Imāms' claims to being the sole legitimate leaders of the Muslim community (with the exception of 'Alī, 651-61 A.D.), but as long as the Imāms were visibly present, there was always the hope that they could succeed to the leadership. All this changed when the twelfth Imām went into the Greater Occultation, for now there could be no legitimate government until his return as the Mahdi.

. . . with the occultation of the Twelfth Imām . . . even the possibility of the legitimate exercise of power disappeared from the world. Hence all states are inalienably usurpatory, even those of formal Shī'ī affiliation.¹²

Since no state can therefore secure legitimacy, Shī'īs can never

be entirely reconciled with them--creating a tension between the political and religious spheres, and varying degrees of hostility. The political objective of the 'ulamā', then, is the "curbing and limitation of this illegitimate organ."¹³

Some scholars have questioned the theory that Shī'ī doctrine negates temporal rule in the absence of the Imām and has been a motivating factor in the involvement of the 'ulamā' in politics.¹⁴ However, there is a doctrinal provision in the sources for the 'ulamā' to protest injustice (zulm), especially in light of the Qur'ānic injunction to "command the good and forbid the bad" (al-amr bi-al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar).¹⁵ Thus, the 'ulamā' may play a political role--from legal protests, such as issuing fatwās,¹⁶ to direct political demonstrations--in guarding against the abuses of the state, their purpose ranging from simply changing government policy, to toppling the government.¹⁷

The primary motivation for the 'ulamā' to have assumed this type of leadership is the fact of the Greater Occultation and the subsequent vacuum of legitimate rule. There was a need for someone to fill the void left by the absence of the Imām in the day to day guidance of the Shī'ī community in the path of the sharī'ah, and this duty came to be increasingly assumed by the 'ulamā' claiming to be his deputies.¹⁸ Although they do not share in the Imām's infallibility or question his legitimate right to rule, by supplying "living and continuous direction to the community"¹⁹ in his absence, they come to share in his authority

in some way. Several scholars have argued that this authority is derived by an ex ante appointment from the Imāms,²⁰ however, Eliash maintains that

the source of the authority of the mujtahid to adduce legal ordinances is solely his acquired learning whereas the source of his power to judge the community remains the community's willingness to select him and to appoint him to his office.²¹

The role of being the agents of the Imām falls specifically to the mujtahids, the highest ranking members of the clerical hierarchy. It is their excellence in learning which qualifies them to interpret the sharī'ah on the basis of independent reasoning (ijtihād).²² Sunnī Islam supposedly rejects the principle of ijtihād,²³ but its acceptance in Shī'ī fiqh permits the mujtahids to adapt religious law to changing conditions, thereby approximating more closely the authority of the Imām.²⁴

The power and influence of the 'ulamā' is further enhanced by the principle of taqlīd, according to which it is necessary for a believer to follow the guidance of a living mujtahid in religious matters.²⁵ The believer himself must choose the most learned and pious of those available to follow. A mujtahid with a large popular following attains the rank of marja'-i taqlīd, "the source of emulation."²⁶ Akhavi describes them as "the focus of allegiance of the general population as to matters of social conduct and interaction."²⁷ It is possible for one mujtahid to attain such recognition by the whole community as the 'sole' marja' of the age--such as Burūjirdī (1945-61)--, however, there are usually several at the same time, with their own bases of

support.²⁸

The Shī'ī have long debated, though with no final consensus, the issue of whether the authority of the 'ulamā' includes political matters along with religious and spiritual in the absence of the Imām.²⁹ The 'ulamā' almost inevitably become involved in political matters³⁰ in their role as guides, and

the mujtahid, in his capacity as marja', is liable to dispense guidance on political matters in a sense opposed to the will of the state and ipso facto to become the leader of opposition.³¹

It is also a necessity, according to the Shī'ī doctrine of taqlīd, that the monarch himself be "theoretically bound, no less than his subjects, to submit to the authoritative guidance of the mujtahid."³²

However, there is still much debate over whether the 'ulamā' may involve themselves in politics to the point of establishing their rule, with executive powers. At the one extreme are men like Khumaynī,³³ who claim full governmental authority and power, and at the other are those like Burūjirdī, who avoided any political involvement.³⁴

IRANIAN 'ulamā''s HISTORIC OPPOSITION TO STATE TYRANNY AND FOREIGN DOMINATION, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Iran's Shī'a clerics have traditionally played an oppositional and political role unlike Sunnī clerics in other states. There are certain characteristics in Shī'ī history and ideology which support an oppositional role to the state.

One important source of inspiration for Shī'ī political protest is their historical experience as a minority 'heterodox'

sect. Their resistance to the rule of the Sunnī Umayyad and 'Abbāsīd caliphs found them, from the beginning, in a position of protest and opposition unlike the more conciliatory tone which can be seen in the Sunnī tradition.³⁵

Symbology has heightened this trend, as historical events--political defeats and persecutions--have taken on mythic proportions. The martyrdom of Ḥusayn³⁶--the third Imām and second son of 'Alī--is of particular importance in this regard as it is a source of intense passion for the Shī'īs.

Throughout the year, and especially during the ninth and tenth of Muḥarram, the events at Karbala are ritually re-enacted in epic narratives (rawḡahkhvānī) and dramatic performances (ta'zīyah), the latter of which may entail acts of self-flagellation through which the participants vicariously share in the suffering of the Imām.³⁷

Ḥusayn's martyrdom has great political impact because, in a greater sense, it symbolizes the whole struggle of justice against injustice and oppression and may therefore serve as a model for contemporary struggles against oppression.³⁸ Religious leaders have frequently made use of it in metaphor and analogy to arouse the people against the state,³⁹ as when Khumaynī compared the Shah to "the Yazīd of the age," in 1963, prompting his expulsion.⁴⁰

The adoption of Shī'ism as the official religion of the state under the Ṣafavids, after centuries of being a subservient minority in the greater world of Islam, gave Shī'īs a territorial base by which they could differentiate themselves from their Sunnī 'oppressors.'⁴¹ This special position of Shī'ism in Iran

makes the religious classes particularly sensitive to perceived threats, both from within--against state tyranny--and from without--from foreign encroachment. Western imperialism is seen as a threat to Shī'ism by foreign 'infidels', thereby linking religion and nationalism in defense against foreign domination⁴² and setting the 'ulamā', as the spokesmen for Shī'ism, in the position of 'national leaders'.⁴³ This linkage has led to alliances at times between the 'ulamā' and liberal nationalists--playing a significant part in the Tobacco Protest, the Constitutional Movement, oil nationalisation under Muṣaddiq, and the revolution of 1978-79.⁴⁴

The dual concern with internal and external forces in the linkage between religion and politics in Iran⁴⁵ becomes combined when the 'unjust' ruler becomes the vehicle for foreign encroachment,⁴⁶ and this has been a key factor in the involvement of the Iranian 'ulamā' in politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁷

Under the Qajars, a rift developed between the state and the 'ulamā' because of increasing foreign encroachment. Their opposition to this Western influence saw the 'ulamā' gaining a new position and influence as proponents of a rising nationalism, rather than as a function of Shī'ī political theory.⁴⁸

SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE 'ulamā' IN POLITICS

There are very special linkages between the 'ulama' and the

people which provide motivating factors for their involvement in politics. The principle of taqlīd, as mentioned, provides a strong doctrinal basis for their leadership role in guiding the community. This role is given emphasis by the various functions that the 'ulamā' perform in daily life, especially in education and in the administration of shar', or canon law (as opposed to 'urf or customary law),⁴⁹ but also in watching over funds and properties in their care--private waqfs, for example--, as well as leading prayer and other ceremonials.⁵⁰ Their various functions have earned them the respect and confidence of the people,⁵¹ with the result that, where other means of dialogue with the state--such as political parties and a parliament--are lacking, the people turn to the 'ulama' to express their grievances.⁵² They have also been a historical refuge against an unjust and oppressive state.⁵³

There is also a certain amount of financial dependence on the people on the part of the 'ulamā', depending on charitable donations (khums) for support, which obliges them to represent the people's interests against the state.⁵⁴ This financial dependence increased markedly after Riḏā Shah brought the administration of waqfs, whose revenues supported mosques and madrasahs, under state control. We can see an example of the influence of the people over the 'ulamā's political views in the case of the marja'-i taqlīd, whose position is determined by the size of his following as well as his learning and piety. Those with the most followers receive the most contributions, but where

the guidance of the marja' goes against the will of the people, they may withdraw their popular and financial support, reducing his power. It is, therefore, in the interests of the 'ulamā' to respond to the needs of the people.

It has been argued that because of this directional flow of influence, the conservative tendencies of the population have militated against modernist and progressive developments in Shī'ī thought.⁵⁵

One important linkage between the 'ulamā' and the people which has proven to be an effective political alliance against the state is that with the merchants of the bazaar, the centre of trade and finance in the economy of Iran. Their relationship with the 'ulamā' is one of interdependency, the bazaaris providing most of the khums in urban areas, and the 'ulamā', in turn, educating their children, arbitrating trade disputes, certifying commercial documents according to shar', and voicing their protests when their livelihood is threatened--as by increased competition from western goods. Closing the bazaar is an effective weapon to pressure the government, and the merchants provide ready manpower for a show of force.⁵⁶

Another factor contributing to the strength of the 'ulamā' in opposition to the state has been their historical independence from its control--except during the Safavid era⁵⁷--leaving the government with little coercive power. This independence was derived largely through financial and administrative factors--they are funded by the people not the state, and the state has no involvement in the appointment or dismissal of a mujtahid; "his holding of office is based on a private agreement between him and

those he is to judge or guide."⁵⁸ Neither has there been any involvement of outside authorities in the selection of the marja' of the age.⁵⁹ The state has also found it difficult to gain control because of their loose organizational structure.⁶⁰ All of this has given the Iranian Shī'ī 'ulamā' greater political latitude than the largely state controlled Sunnī religious institutions in Egypt and Turkey, for example.⁶¹

Another significant factor strengthening the oppositional position of the 'ulamā' is the availability of sanctuary in the 'atabat--the shrine centers of Najaf, Karbala, Kazimayn, and Samarra in Iraq--where the Iranian authorities could not reach them. During the Constitutional Revolution, Najaf became a base of operations against the Qajar régime.⁶² It was also in Najaf where Khumaynī settled when he was exiled, continuing, from there, his opposition against Muḥammad Reẓā Shah.⁶³

CHANGES IN THE LEVEL OF ACTIVE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF THE 'ulamā' THROUGHOUT HISTORY

The level of political participation of the 'ulamā' has varied markedly throughout Shī'ī history. With the political claims of the Imāms denied in the early periods, when the community was small and at risk, they assumed a quiescent posture in light of the principle of tagiyah, "prudential dissimulation of belief, particularly in time of danger"⁶⁴--especially after the occultation of the twelfth Imām.⁶⁵ This quiescence continued under the Ṣafavids, who seemed to be serving the interests of

Shī'ism,⁶⁶ but under the Qajars, the 'ulamā' became increasingly involved in the opposition movement against the state.

This change to political activism under the Qajars was an important step in the developments which would lead to the revolution of 1978-79, helping to set the stage for the 'ulamā's position at the forefront of opposition.

Although the Qajars were in control of Iran since 1795, the nineteenth century saw their position gradually weaken as they were unable to establish a strong central authority in the provinces beyond Tehran. On top of a weak army and a lack of a central bureaucracy were the problems of difficult terrain, large distances and scattered settlements, poor communications, linguistic differences, and a large population of nomads. The Qajars were forced to delegate authority to local leaders, leading to competing local power centres, often with their own armies.⁶⁷

To balance off these internal forces, the Qajars turned to Britain and Russia for support, in exchange for which they granted major commercial and territorial concessions. Neither power dared to try directly colonizing Iran because of the other, nevertheless, because of Qajar weakness, they did exert considerable control, both politically and economically--due to financial indebtedness and concessions to foreign firms.⁶⁸ The political weakness of the Qajars and increasing foreign intervention, in the late nineteenth century, gave birth to a nationalist opposition movement, whose ideology was largely

religious because of the link between religion and nationalism. Fearing that they would lead to foreign rule by infidels, protest focused on the economic concessions, first against the Reuter Concession in 1872⁶⁹ and even more powerfully against the tobacco monopoly given to a British firm in 1891-92.⁷⁰

The 'ulamā' were playing a significant role in the protest movements, their increasing activity in politics a direct result of their increased power under the weak Qajars⁷¹ and the growth of foreign influence. The people turned to the 'ulamā' to voice their protests, particularly the Bazaaris who were most hurt by foreign economic competition, their alliance forming a significant factor in the success of the Tobacco Protest.⁷² The 'ulamā' were also the voice for the liberal nationalists, who saw a tactical value--rather than shared ideological concerns--in courting them, since no nationalist movement could succeed without their popular influence.⁷³ These factors gave the 'ulamā' a significant power base in opposition to a rapacious foreign influence allied with the state.⁷⁴

Certain doctrinal factors also contributed to the strength of the 'ulamā' at this time. The Uṣūlī school of Shī'ī thought had come to predominate over the Akhbārīs, the Uṣūlīs arguing that a living mujtahid was the legitimate source of guidance in the absence of the Imām.⁷⁵ Thus, according to taqlīd, the Shah himself must also follow the guidance of a mujtahid, but "throughout the Qajar period the idea remained far from fulfillment, and there was therefore a certain tension inherent

in relations between the ulama and the monarchy."⁷⁶

The position of the Qajars was further weakened vis-à-vis the 'ulamā' by their lack of political legitimacy--being of Turkish origin, whereas the Ṣafavids claimed hereditary descent from the Imāms.⁷⁷

This usurpatory nature of the state . . . emerged with great clarity in the Qajar period, inspiring a pervasive attitude of repugnance to the state and its representatives.⁷⁸

The Pahlavis would later face this same problem of a lack of political legitimacy.

The Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11⁷⁹ was the high point for the participation of the 'ulamā' in politics under the Qajars,⁸⁰ although they were split between those who favoured and helped lead it--such as Sayyid Abdullah Bihbahānī and Sayyid Muḥammad Tabatabā'i--and those--like Shaykh Faḡlullāh--who either opposed the entire constitutional movement or its non-Sharī'ah nature.⁸¹ The alliance of 'ulamā', liberal nationalists and bazaaris emerged again as an important factor in the political protest, as it has been ever since.⁸²

The aims of the Constitutional Revolution were to counter both the rising foreign influence and the increasing arbitrary and oppressive rule of the Qajars.⁸³ The movement gained unity and strength due to the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907--attempting to divide Iran into two spheres of influence--, yet increased its focus by adopting European liberal ideology in the form of the Constitution. Although they were able to force the Shah to accept the Constitution of 1906-7, and it remained in

effect, formally, throughout the rest of the Qajar years and under the Pahlavīs, it proved to be empty of substance in practice. It was intended to limit the power of the Shah by the creation of an elected parliament, the Majlis, and by legally recognizing the position and power of the 'ulamā'. The Majlis was to have executive authority, including the contraction of foreign loans and the granting of concessions. Ithnā'asharī Shī'ism was defined as the official religion of the state, with the Majlis prohibited from passing legislation contrary to the principles of Islam and the laws set down by the Prophet, requiring approval of all proposed legislation by a five-member committee of the highest ranking mujtahids.⁸⁴ The committee was a compromise by the 'ulamā', who were not unanimous on the principle that the people should have sovereignty in the absence of the Imām.⁸⁵

The changes envisaged in the Constitution failed in practice due to the intransigence of the Shah, differences between the constitutionalists, conflicts between pro and anti-Shah forces, and Anglo-Russian intervention.⁸⁶ However, it would continue to serve as a focus for opposition movements, seeking a restoration of the Constitution, through to the Revolution of 1978-79.

Although it is often difficult to differentiate, it was not only purely religious concerns which motivated the involvement of the 'ulamā' in the Constitutional Revolution, but also their own class interests,⁸⁷ trying to preserve their power and authority in the face of Westernization and secularization (especially in law and education).⁸⁸ This same defensive posture in the face of

an alliance between the state and imperialism, seeking to undermine their position, would become particularly acute under the Pahlavīs.

PAHLAVĪ IRAN

Rizā Khan, a colonel in the Russian Cossack Brigade, seized power in February 1921 following a British-assisted coup,⁸⁹ crowning himself Shah five years later, with the title Pahlavī after an ancient, pre-Islamic, Persian language called Pahlavī. He set about centralizing power as well as economic and social modernization: building a fairly modern and centralized army and bureaucracy, improving transportation and communications, fostering the growth of state-controlled industry, and expanding secular education.⁹⁰ Although strongly nationalist, he was hampered in his efforts to achieve full national independence by the fact that the oil industry was largely controlled by the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC).⁹¹

His reforms triggered significant changes--the increase in secular education, for example, creating a new segment in Iranian society, the 'new middle class', employed in the army, the bureaucracy, the 'modern' economic and professional sectors, and the newly established (1934) University of Tehran.⁹² His industrialization programme sparked growth in the urban working class--doubling between 1929-1941⁹³--, but he did little for agrarian reform in the country, where the majority lived, except to make himself the largest landowner, change the composition of

the landowning class--transferring land to favorites--, and force rebellious tribes to settle.⁹⁴

Rizā Shah used his office to go from a modest income to being the richest man in Iran. Part of his wealth was in the form of 3,000,000 acres of the richest land, obtained partly by confiscations, forced sales, and dubious claims of royal domain. This property supported a burgeoning landed-military complex of Pahlavī supporters.⁹⁵

Rizā Shah's reforms had a dramatic effect on the religious institution. He cultivated their favour until he became Shah, but then, perceiving them as a hindrance to his modernization and a threat to his power, he progressively worked to undermine their position with various secularizing measures, especially in law, education, and the administration of wagfs.⁹⁶

The opposition of the 'ulamā' to Rizā Shah was in large part due to their view that he was a British puppet supporting British economic and political interests in southern Iran, particularly oil. In the beginning, as well, he had planned to change from a monarchy to a republican system--which they feared would destroy their constitutionally based power--although he backed off in light of their influence, and continued to court their support for a while. After consolidating his position and becoming Shah, however, he worked to undermine their power, forced the wearing of western dress⁹⁷--including banning the veil (1936)--, de-emphasized religious subjects in secular schools, introduced co-ed schools, and either closed religious colleges or reduced their

activities to an all time low.⁹⁸

Rizā Shah's changes undermined the traditional Islamic structures, as well, by providing, not only education and training for increasing numbers in a secular system, but also westernized courts, law codes, judges, and lawyers. It was not only the forced unveiling of women, but their entry as well into the paid labour market which went against central Islamic traditions.⁹⁹

Rizā Shah's measures also included a new national mythology emphasizing the glories of pre-Islamic Iran--for example, changing the name of the country from 'Persia' to 'Iran' in 1934 and choosing the title 'Pahlavī'. Students in the secular schools were taught "to regard Islam as an alien faith imposed on Iran by an inferior civilization."¹⁰⁰ Instead of religion, loyalty to the country was to be the unifying national force.¹⁰¹

He further provoked the opposition of the 'ulamā' by prohibiting the religious drama (ta'zīyah) and processions associated with Muḥarram (1933)¹⁰², and sent his troops in response to religious protests, desecrating Shī'ī shrines such as that at Mashhad (1935).¹⁰³

In response to Rizā Shah's willingness to use military force to quell opposition, the 'ulamā' reverted to quietism for most of his rule--a traditional response throughout much of Shī'ī history--, offering little overt resistance to further secular measures.¹⁰⁴

All of Rizā Shah's modernizing and Westernizing reforms took

place against the background of his increasingly authoritarian rule--ignoring the Majlis and Constitution, taking increasing personal control, and surrounding himself with subservient advisers.¹⁰⁵ He tightened the reins on independent political activity, banned communism and trade unions, and leaned heavily on the army as his main support base--lacking that with the people--, thus beginning a political dictatorship later augmented by his son.¹⁰⁶

Rizā Shah's rule ended when Britain and Russia invaded in 1941 and forced him to abdicate--allegedly for his pro-German sympathies--, replacing him as Shah with his twenty-one year old son Muḥammad Rizā.¹⁰⁷

NOTES

¹Syed Husain M. Jafri, The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam (New York: Longmans, 1979), Chapter 11, pp. 280-312.

²Darling, p. 16. Shī'ism began with the dissension which arose upon the death of the Prophet Muḥammad over who would succeed him as leader of the community. The ahl al-Sunnah insisted it should be one of the Prophet's companions, whereas the Shī'ah insisted on kin association as the sole determinant and that Muḥammad had specifically designated 'Alī. The term Shī'ah means the 'party,' 'partisans,' or 'followers' (i.e., of 'Alī). The succession, they reasoned, should continue in the family of the Prophet through the line of male descendants of his daughter Fatimah and her husband 'Alī. On the early origins of Shī'ism, see Dwight M. Donaldson, The Shi'ite Religion: A History of Islam in Persia and Irak, Luzac's Oriental Religions, 6 (London: Luzac & CO., 1933); and Syed Husain M. Jafri, Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam (New York: Longmans, 1979).

³Muhammad Rafii Yunus, "The Necessity of Imāmah According to Twelver-Shī'ism; with Special Reference to Tajrīd al-i'tiqād of Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī," (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1976), p. 16.

⁴William G. Millward, "Theoretical and Practical Grounds for Religious Opposition to Monarchy in Iran," in L'Iran: d'Hier et de Demain (Quebec: Centre Quebecois de Relations Internationales, 1980), p. 38.

⁵Wilfred Madelung, "Imāma," Encyclopedia of Islam, New Edition, vol. 3 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971-), p. 1166.

⁶Hamid Algar, Religion & State in Iran, 1785-1905: The Role of the Ulama in the Qajar Period (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 6.

⁷Yunus, p. 16.

⁸Ibid., pp. 18-19; For further discussion on the differences between khalīfah and imāmah, see Andrea M. Farsakh, "A Comparison of the Sunnī Caliphate and the Shī'ī Imāmate," Muslim World, Vol. LIX, No. 2 (1969), p. 129.

⁹Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁰Hamid Algar, "The Oppositional Role of the Ulama in Twentieth-Century Iran," in Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500, ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972;

paperback ed. by same publisher, 1978), pp. 231-55; Nikki R. Keddie, "The Roots of the Ulama's Power in Modern Iran," in Scholars, Saints, and Sufis (as cited), pp. 211-19; and Ann K. S. Lambton, "A Reconsideration of the Position of the Marja' Al-Taglid and the Religious Institution," Studia Islamica 20 (1964) :115-35.

¹¹Darling, p. 16; for further discussion of the doctrine and development of the Ithna'ashari Shi'i institution of the Imamate, see Algar, Religion and State, pp. 2-5; Donaldson, Shi'ite Religion; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Ithna'Ashari Shi'ism and Iranian Islam," in Religion in the Middle East: Three Religions in Concord and Conflict, gen. ed. A. J. Arberry, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), vol. 2: Islam, pp. 96-118; and Jafri, Origins and Early Development, especially chapters 9 and 10.

¹²Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 232.

¹³Ibid., p. 232.

¹⁴Darling 18; Arjomand, "Political Action," especially pp. 106-9; Joseph Eliash, "Misconceptions Regarding the Juridical Status of the Iranian 'Ulama'," International Journal of Middle East Studies 10 (1979), p. 24; Michael M. J. Fischer, Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution, Harvard Studies in Cultural Anthropology, 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 5-7; Shahrough Akhavi, Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran: Clergy-State Relations in the Pahlavi Period (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980), p. 184.

¹⁵Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 12.

¹⁶A fatwa is an authoritative opinion issued by a mujtahid on a point of law.

¹⁷Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 15.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 11; and Algar, Religion and State, pp. 5-6.

¹⁹Algar, Religion and State, p. 5.

²⁰Darling 58; Algar, Religion and State; idem., "Oppositional Role"; and Leonard Binder, "The Proofs of Islam: Religion and Politics in Iran," in Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honour of Hamilton A. R. Gibb, ed. George Makdisi, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), pp. 118-40.

²¹Eliash, "Misconceptions," p. 15.

²²Binder, "Proofs," p. 132.

²³It has been argued that the door of ijtihād is not so firmly closed in Sunnī Islam. See Nikkie R. Keddie, "Iran: Change in Islam: Islam and Change," International Journal of Middle East Studies 11 (1980), pp. 528-29.

²⁴Binder, "Proofs," p. 125. Because the Shī'ī 'ulamā' have the right of ijtihād, they also have greater authority than Sunnī religious leaders, who must follow the paths of the four Sunnī schools--even when this, in practice, has often been more in the ideal than the real. See Binder, "Proofs," p. 124; and Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 11.

²⁵Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 235.

²⁶For further discussion on the criteria for becoming a marja'-i taqlīd, see Algar, Religion and State, pp. 8-10; Binder, "Proofs," p. 132; and Lambton, "Marja' Al-Taqlīd," *passim*.

²⁷Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 10.

²⁸Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 235.

²⁹Darling, 24. For a discussion of views on the 'ulamā's political authority, see Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 23-24 and 170. For hadīths legitimizing the 'ulamā's right of rulership, see Abdul-Hadi Hairi, "Shī'ism and Constitutionalism: A Study of the Life and views of Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥusayn Nā'īnī, a Shī'ī Mujtahid of Iran." 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1973), 1:120-21; subsequently published by Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975. On the significance of the issue of the 'ulamā's 'right to rule' in the creation of the 1979 Iranian Constitution and an 'Islamic Republic,' see Fischer, Iran, pp. 221-22; Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 174-77; and Shaul Bakhash, "The Iranian Revolution," New York Review of Books, June 26, 1980, pp. 25-26 and 31.

³⁰Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 184.

³¹Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 235.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 235.

³³Darling 25. For Khumaynī's arguments on why 'just men of Islamic jurisprudence' (fugahā'-i 'ādil) are legitimately vested with governmental power and authority in the absence of the Imam, based on the principle of walāyah, see Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 163-68 and 212-13, n. 7.

³⁴Akhavi, Religion and Politics, 24; and Sepehr Zabih, The Mossadegh Era (Chicago: Lake View Press, 1982), pp. 13-14.

³⁵Akhavi, p. 12; and Jafri, p. 261.

³⁶Husayn was killed at Karbala (in present day southern Iraq) in 680 A.D. after contesting the appointment of Yazīd as successor to the Umayyad caliphate.

³⁷Darling 20; for a further description of these events, see Fischer, Iran, pp. 170-78; and Gustav Thaiss, "Religious Symbolism and Social Change: The Drama of Husain," in Scholars, Saints, and Sufis (as cited), pp. 352-58.

³⁸Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 233.

³⁹Thaiss, "Religious Symbolism," pp. 359-60.

⁴⁰Lambton, "Marja' Al-Taqlīd," p. 120.

⁴¹Ann K. S. Lambton, "The Persian 'Ulamā and Constitutional Reform," in Le Shī'ism Imamite: Colloque de Strasbourg, 6-9 mai 1968, ed. Tawfiq Fahd (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1970), p. 248; and Charles F. Gallagher, "Contemporary Islam: The Plateau of Particularism: Problems of Religion and Nationalism in Iran," American Universities Field Staff, Reports Services, Southwest Asia Series, vol. 25, no. 2 (Iran), July 1966, pp. 4-5, 10-13.

⁴²"This linkage between nationalism and religion in the Islamic context is not, of course, unique to Iran--it has been a distinguishing feature of nationalist protest politics in the Middle East since the late nineteenth century. However, given the Shī'ah's minority experience, it may be argued that 'religious nationalism' (or 'nationalist religion') is of special importance in Iran." Darling, pp. 21 and 57.

⁴³Algar, Religion and State, p. 24.

⁴⁴Darling, pp. 21-22.

⁴⁵Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 236.

⁴⁶Millward, "Religious Opposition," p. 45; and Adele K. Ferdows, "Religion in Iranian Nationalism: A Study of the Fadāyān-i Islām," (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1967), p. 90.

⁴⁷Darling, p. 22.

⁴⁸Hossein Bashiriyeh, The State and Revolution in Iran 1962-1982 (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 8-9. For further discussion of the roots of 'ulama' power, see N. Keddie, "The Roots of the Ulama's Power in Modern Iran", and H. Algar, "The

Oppositional Role of the Ulama in Twentieth-Century Iran," both in N. Keddie, ed., Scholars, Saints and Sufis: Moslem Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500, (Berkeley: 1972).

⁴⁹Darling 25. Family, property, and commercial matters were dealt with by the shar' courts, and state and public security matters by the 'urf courts. For further discussion, see Algar, Religion and State, pp. 12-14.

⁵⁰Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," pp. 249-50.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 252; and Keddie, "The Iranian Power Structure and Social Change, 1800-1969: An Overview," International Journal of Middle East Studies 2 (1971), p. 5.

⁵²Binder, "Proofs," p. 139; and Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," p. 249.

⁵³Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," pp. 246-50 passim; and Algar, Religion and State, p. 24.

⁵⁴Darling, p. 26. Khums, 'one fifth', is the portion of income that Shī'īs are to contribute as a tax to the religious establishment. One-half (sahm-i imām) is for the marja'-i taqlīd for maintaining mosques, etc. On the juridical basis for the payment of khums to the 'ulamā', see Eliash, "Misconceptions," pp. 18-21. On the subject of other sources of income for the religious institution in Qajar times, see Algar, Religion and State, pp. 14-16.

⁵⁵Darling, 27. See, also, Lambton, "Marja' Al-Taqlīd," p. 118 and "Persian 'Ulama," p. 250; and Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 125.

⁵⁶Darling, p. 28. On the alliance between the 'ulamā' and the bazaaris and its political effectiveness, see Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," p. 251; Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 236; and Ervand Abrahamian, "The Crowd in Iranian Politics, 1905-1953," Past and Present 41 (1968):184-210 passim.

⁵⁷Algar, Religion and State, pp. 27-30; Keddie, "Roots," pp. 217-22; R. M. Savory, "Safavid Persia," in The Cambridge History of Islam, ed. P. M. Holt, Ann K. S. Lambton, and Bernard Lewis, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), vol. 1: The Central Islamic Lands, pp. 394-429; and Hamid Algar, "Some Observations on Religion in Safavid Persia," Iranian Studies 7 (1974):287-93.

⁵⁸Eliash, "Misconceptions," p. 21.

⁵⁹Darling, p. 28. Millward, in "Religious Opposition" (p. 45) states that "to safeguard the process from outside

interference the Shī'ī 'ulamā have never agreed to put in writing the process by which the marja' of the age is agreed upon." When Burūjirdī died in 1961, the Shah attempted to influence the choice of an Arab mujtahid living in Najaf, Āyatullāh al-Hakim, but was largely ignored. The issue resurfaced in 1970 upon the death of al-Hakim. See Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 244-45 and 252.

⁶⁰Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 18-21; and Binder, "Proofs," p. 135.

⁶¹Darling, p. 29; Morroe Berger, Islam in Egypt Today: Social and Political Aspects of Popular Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Daniel Crecelius, "Nonideological Responses of the Egyptian Ulama to Modernization," in Saints, Scholars, and Sufis (as cited), pp. 167-209; Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); and Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964).

⁶²Darling, p. 29; and Lambton, "Quis," p. 145.

⁶³Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 249.

⁶⁴Darling, p. 29; Algar, Religion and State, p. 3. It was the sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq (d. 765 A.D.), who developed and emphasized the concept of taqīyah. See Jafri, Origins and Early Development, pp. 298-300.

⁶⁵Algar, Religion and State, p. 3.

⁶⁶Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 14; and Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," p. 247.

⁶⁷Darling, p. 30; Ervand Abrahamian, "Oriental Despotism: The Case of Qajar Iran," International Journal of Middle East Studies 5 (1974):3-31; Shaul Bakhash, "The Evolution of Qajar Bureaucracy: 1779-1879," Middle Eastern Studies 7 (1970):139-68; and Ann K. S. Lambton, "Persian Society under the Qajars," Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society 48 (1961):123-39.

⁶⁸Darling, p. 31; Richard W. Cottam, Nationalism in Iran: Updated through 1978 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), pp. 9, 12-14; Nikki R. Keddie, "The Economic History of Iran, 1800-1914, and Its Political Impact: An Overview," Iranian Studies 5 (1972):58-78; Rouhollah K. Ramazani, The Foreign Policy of Iran: A Developing Nation in World Affairs, 1500-1941 (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966), Chapters 2-4; Denis A. H. Wright, The English among the Persians during the Qajar Period, 1787-1921 (London: Heinemann, 1977).

69The Reuter Concession granted a monopoly over tramways, railways, canals, irrigation works, forests, uncultivated lands, banks, public works, and exclusivity over mines (except gold, silver, and precious stones). Darling, pp. 31 and 63; George N. Curzon, Persia and the Persian Question, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1892), 1:480-84; and L. E. Frechtling, "The Reuter Concession in Persia," Asian Review 34 (1938):518-33; Nikki R. Keddie, Religion and Rebellion in Iran: The Tobacco Protest of 1891-1892 (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1966), pp. 4-9.

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70The Tobacco Concession exchanged full control over the production, sale, and export of all tobacco in Iran for a period of fifty years, for £15,000 plus one-quarter of the profits to the Shah. Āyatullāh Mīrzā Shirāzī (d. 1894) issued a fatvā, in December 1891, prohibiting the smoking of tobacco, which brought mass support and the repeal of the concession, in January 1892. Algar, Religion and State, pp. 205-21; Ann. K. S. Lambton, "The Tobacco Regie: Prelude to Revolution," Studia Islamica 22 (1965):119-57; and Edward G. Browne, The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), Chapters 1 and 2.

71Keddie, "Iranian Power Structure," pp. 4-6.

72Keddie, Religion and Rebellion, pp. 7, 65-66, 94-96, 103-4.

73Darling, p. 32; Nikki R. Keddie, "The Origins of the Religious-Radical Alliance in Iran," Past and Present 34 (1966):70-80; idem, "Religion and Irreligion in Early Iranian Nationalism," Comparative Studies in Society and History, 4 (1962), pp. 278-89; and Ann. K. S. Lambton, "Islamic Society in Persia," an inaugural lecture delivered on March 9, 1954 (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1954), pp. 28-29.

74Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 25.

75The Akhbārīs argued that the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth of the Prophet and Imāms provided enough guidance, minimizing the need for a mujtahid. Darling, pp. 33 and 64; Akhavi, Religion and

Politics, pp. 11 and 121; Algar, Religion and State, pp. 7 and 33-36; Hairi, "Shi'ism and Constitutionalism," 1:131-33; and Keddie, "Roots," pp. 222-25.

⁷⁶Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 235.

⁷⁷Shah Isma'il, the founder of the Safavid dynasty, claimed descent from the Prophet and the hidden Twelfth Imām through the seventh, Musa al-Kazim. Darling, pp. 33 and 64; and Lambton, "Quis," p. 125.

⁷⁸Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 232.

⁷⁹For further discussion on the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-7, see Ervand Abrahamian, "The Causes of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran," International Journal of Middle East Studies 10 (1979):381-414; Algar, Religion and State, Chapter 14; Browne, Persian Revolution; Hairi, "Shi'ism and Constitutionalism"; and Nikki R. Keddie "Iranian Politics, 1900-1905: Background to Revolution," Middle Eastern Studies 5 (1969):3-31, 151-67, 234-50.

⁸⁰Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 16.

⁸¹N.R. Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, ed. N.R. Keddie and E. Hooglund (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1985), p. 6.

⁸²Darling, p. 34.

⁸³Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," pp. 254-56.

⁸⁴F. R. C. Bagley, "Religion and the State in Iran," Islamic Studies 10 (1971), p. 12 (hereafter cited as Bagley, "Religion and State"); and Darling, p. 35.

⁸⁵One of the main opponents of Constitutionalism from among the 'ulamā', Āyatullāh Shaykh Faḡlullāh Nūrī, argued that government should be limited by divine law (the sharī'ah) not human law and that law making authority rested solely with the mujtahids in the absence of the Imām. Darling, p. 65. For further discussion on the factionalism, see Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 237-40; Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 15-16; Fischer, Iran, pp. 149-51; and Hairi, "Shi'ism and Constitutionalism," pp. 302-9, 354-55, 382-85, 409-70 *passim*.

⁸⁶Darling, p. 34.

⁸⁷Binder, "Proofs," p. 136. Several scholars stress caution in attributing too much of a class-interest motivation to the involvement of the 'ulamā', placing more of an emphasis on religious concerns and unjust rule. Akhavi, Religion and

Politics, p. 26; Hairi, "Shi'ism and Constitutionalism," pp. 190-91; and Keddie, "Roots," p. 227.

⁸⁸Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 28 and 32-36; Hafiz Farman Farmayan, "The Forces of Modernization in Nineteenth Century Iran: A Historical Survey," in Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century, ed. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 119-51; Keddie, "Religion and Irreligion," p. 290; and Lambton, "Persian 'Ulama," pp. 258-62.

⁸⁹Cottam, Nationalism, pp. 192-95.

⁹⁰Amin Banani, The Modernization of Iran, 1921-1941 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1961); and Julian Bharier, Economic Development in Iran, 1900-1970 (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

⁹¹Darling, p. 37; Lawrence P. Elwell-Sutton, Persian Oil: A Study in Power Politics (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955), pp. 67-103 passim; Ramazani, Foreign Policy of Iran, pp. 250-57; and Benjamin Shwadran, The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers, 2nd ed., rev. (New York: Council for Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1959), pp. 41-59.

⁹²James A. Bill, The Politics of Iran: Groups, Classes and Modernization (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company., 1972), pp. 54ff; Darling, p. 37; Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963; Princeton Paperback, 1965). For an opposing view to Halpern, see Bryan S. Turner, Marx and the End of Orientalism, Controversies in Sociology, 7 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), pp. 48-49.

⁹³Sepehr Zabih, The Communist Movement in Iran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 72, n. 2.

⁹⁴Keddie, "Iranian Power Structure," p. 10.

⁹⁵Ervand Abrahamian, Iran Between Two Revolutions (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 137.

⁹⁶Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 37-55; Banani, Modernization of Iran, especially pp. 68-111 passim; and Vida (Riazai Davoudi) Garoussian, "The Ulema and Secularization in Contemporary Iran" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 1974), pp. 23-45.

⁹⁷For a discussion of the Uniformity of Dress Law (1928) and the campaign against the brimless hat (1935), see Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 42-43.

⁹⁸Aktar Naraghi, "Taleghani (Ṭāliqānī): His Life-Long Struggle During the Pahlavi Regime, His Interpretation of Jihād in Islām; and His Leading Role in the 1979 Revolution of Iran," (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1984), p. 23-25.

⁹⁹Nikki Keddie, "Religion, Society, and Revolution in Modern Iran," in Modern Iran: the Dialectics of Continuity and Change, ed. Michael Bonine and Nikki Keddie, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), pp. 28-29.

¹⁰⁰Darling, p. 38.

¹⁰¹Lambton, "Marja` Al-Taglid," p. 118; A. Reza Arasteh, Man and Society in Iran (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964), p. 105; Gallagher, "Contemporary Islam," pp. 16-18; Garoussian, "Ulema and Secularization," pp. 45-46.

¹⁰²Darling, p. 39.

¹⁰³Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 58-59; and Fischer, Iran, p. 186.

¹⁰⁴Millward, "Religious Opposition," p. 47.

¹⁰⁵Darling, p. 39; Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Mission for My Country, (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1961), p. 322.

¹⁰⁶Cottam, Nationalism, p. 21.

¹⁰⁷George Lencowski, Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948: A Study in Big Power Rivalry (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949), pp. 167-74; and Rouhollah K. Ramazani, Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941-1973: A Study of Foreign Policy in Modernizing Nations (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975), pp. 30-44.

CHAPTER II

CATALYST FOR REVOLUTION: POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND RELIGIOUS DISCONTENT UNDER MUHAMMAD RIZĀ SHAH

This section will examine the conditions under the Shah which were the immediate motivating factors for the revolution. The speed and manner by which the Shah pursued his modernization process shattered traditional ways of life, forcing unfamiliar ones on the people, and increased economic, social, and cultural gaps between rich and poor. Economic policies favoured a small elite, often with close ties to the Shah, and large or multinational enterprises, at the expense of the traditional bazaari class. Although land reform had some positive effects, it deprived many rural Iranians of jobs or subsistence levels of land, encouraging--along with population growth--mass migrations to urban centers lacking sufficient jobs and amenities to support the migrants. This migration both compounded popular discontent and provided manpower for the revolution.¹

The Shah's close ties to the West, in particular the U.S., stimulated the fears and hostility of the people against what they saw as increasing foreign encroachment, especially in light of Iran's historic experience with imperialism. Following upon a period of boom which had raised expectations, economic mismanagement brought inflation and shortages of both jobs and supplies after the mid-1970's. Widespread corruption among top officials, most notably among the royal family, was well known

and added to popular discontent. Seeing the 'ulamā' as a hindrance to his modernization process, the Shah worked to undermine their power and influence, adding them to the growing opposition.

The Shah failed to recognize the need for beneficial reforms until it was too late, and the repressive measures of his security apparatus added fuel to the fire of hatred for the regime. The U.S. likewise failed to appreciate the reality of the situation in Iran and to implement measures to stem the tide of revolution.

The failure of the Shah to deal effectively with the mounting challenge was a contributing factor to his downfall. Having permitted no effective outlets for the venting of grievances or for the participation of a growing politically conscious segment of society left no safety valve to dissipate pressures. His heavy-handed suppression of any form of dissent, even healthy ones, only added to the tensions. The Shah increasingly surrounded himself with servile advisers, becoming more out of touch with the realities of the growing hostility amongst the people. By not being clearly aware of the true state of affairs, as well as simply refusing to make workable concessions at appropriate times, the Shah found himself in the position where the demands of the people had grown too great for him even to consider granting them; it was a case of too little too late.

Another major factor in the success of the revolution, was

the failure of the West, particularly the U.S., to understand clearly what the true situation was in Iran, and to deal effectively with it from that perspective. This was true of both the government and the media.

The Western media tended to see the upheaval as the work of religious extremists opposed to the modernization drive of the well-intentioned Shah wanting to go too far too fast.² America's view of the revolution was then molded by the press and certain biases into seeing America as the innocent victim of irrational hatred in the form of 'Islam'.³

It has given consumers of news the sense that they have understood Islam without at the same time intimating to them that a great deal in this energetic coverage is based on far from objective material. In many instances 'Islam' has licensed not only patent inaccuracy but also expressions of unrestrained ethnocentrism, cultural and even racial hatred, deep yet paradoxically free-floating hostility.⁴

Muhammad Riṣṣā Shah's authority was minimal for the first few years of his reign, with the occupying forces in almost full control. By failing to prevent the occupation, the Pahlavī régime's political legitimacy was also suspect in the eyes of the people. He did not regain the control formerly held by his father until after August 1953.⁵

In the early days of Muḥammad Riṣṣā Shah's reign, political freedoms increased, and existing political parties and groups became active. The army, a powerful instrument of oppression, had been crushed by the allied occupation; there was a spirit of freedom among the people, and the Shah was more dependent on foreign than internal support.⁶ The allied forces also allowed a

more relaxed political atmosphere, with not only political parties and groups flourishing, but also trade unions and newspapers.⁷

The formation of political parties at this time may be viewed along new patterns of class conflict, the parties ranging from nationalist and Islamic modernist to socialist and communist.⁸

Three main political groups of that time deserve special mention. The national movement, which became the National Front Party, was centered around Dr. Muṣaddiq. Marxist movements, organized by the central Tudāh Party members, attracted workers and students and would later form a strong party in opposition to Muṣaddiq. The third group flexing their political muscles in this time of relative freedom was the religious class.⁹

As oppression began to increase again under Muḥammad Riḏā Shah, one of the most notable expressions of rebellion was the separatist movement in Azarbāyjān (1944-46) led by Pīshavarī and the Democratic Party (Firḡah-i Dimūkrāt) with Soviet backing. The Central Government of Iran, with American help, forced the Soviets to withdraw their military forces (March 1946) and the rebellion was crushed. The leaders either escaped to the Soviet Union or were massacred.¹⁰

After crushing the Azarbāyjāni and Kurdish movements, the Shah turned his attention to the Tudāh or 'Masses' Party--founded in 1941 to succeed the Communist Party (1921-1931), which had been banned by Riḏā Shah. The Tūdāh Party had flourished in the

period of freedom following World War II, gaining a large following amongst the salaried middle class and industrial working class--both of which had grown out of the Shah's modernizing reforms--and holding considerable influence in the trade union movement at the time.¹¹ The Tūdah gave support to the separatist movement in Azarbāyjān and served as the movement's official voice in the Majlis.¹²

The Tūdah's strength in opposition to the Shah was due to its organizational abilities, it having been described as "the most organized political force ever seen in Iranian politics."¹³ The Shah banned the Tūdah Party in 1949, charging them with attempted assassination, and forcing their activities underground in future, except for a brief resurgence in the periods 1951-53 and 1960-61. The nationalist middle classes turned away from the Tūdah, due to an increasing Soviet influence, and their materialism negated the possibility of 'ulamā' support.¹⁴

During the period that communism as an ideology, given impetus by the Tūdah Party, was becoming a major threat to the government, religion and the religious class also gained in importance--the government using religious ideology to combat communism.¹⁵ However, as the Shah was to perceive a growing threat in the power of the 'ulamā', he would again take measures to undermine their power, in turn provoking their hostility and renewed opposition to his measures in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

The most serious threat to the Shah, before the 1978-79

revolution, concerned oil nationalization in the period 1951-53. The occupation of Iran in 1941 had fueled the fires of nationalism, now directed against the control of Iran's oil resources by the British through the AIOC. The movement was spearheaded by the National Front under the leadership of Dr. Muṣaddiq.¹⁶ Originally a loose coalition of four liberal political groupings within the Majlis, with the majority of its members from the nationalist middle class, the Front came to encompass diverse elements of Iranian society.¹⁷

The 'ulamā' had been regaining their strength since the abdication of Riḏā Shah,¹⁸ and the issue of oil nationalization found them once again politically active in the cause of Iranian nationalism. Although not unanimous in support of political activism¹⁹ nor of Muṣaddiq, the threat of foreign domination symbolized by British control of the AIOC drew many 'ulamā' into the arena in support of oil nationalization.²⁰

The alliance between the religious class and the liberal nationalists, so prominent in the Constitutional movement, was again revived--primarily due to the National Front on the one hand, and Āyatullāh Kāshānī on the other. Kāshānī (d. 1962)--leader of the Mujāhidīn-i Islām, which was part of the National Front coalition in the Majlis--was an important force in mobilizing support amongst the lower traditional middle classes--merchants, teachers, low-ranking clerics and madrasah students²¹--and, at first, the more militant fundamentalist Fidā'iyān-i Islām, led by Navvāb Ṣafavī.²²

The mass support behind the oil issue forced the Shah and Majlis to appoint Muṣaddiq premier in 1951, whereupon he soon nationalized the oil industry. The opposition on the international front--from Britain and then the U.S.²³--was joined by increasing internal opposition from pro-Shah forces as Muṣaddiq worked to curb the Shah's power. The National Front began to collapse after mid-1953, with Kāshānī splitting from Muṣaddiq over his increasing autocracy.²⁴ An international oil boycott,²⁵ in retaliation for the nationalization of the oil industry, led to heavy losses in oil revenues and a decline in popular support for Muṣaddiq. With his tenuous position rapidly worsening, Muṣaddiq was removed in a CIA-backed coup and the Shah returned to power in August 1953.²⁶

Oppression was increasing again under the Shah, particularly following his experience with Muṣaddiq; he ruthlessly eliminated all opponents, especially those connected with the National Front and Tūdah Party.²⁷ To eliminate any future threat to his power, he strengthened his security forces--army, police, and the newly created SAVAK.

He /The Shah/ received technical assistance from the Israeli intelligence service, as well as from the CIA and the FBI, to establish in 1957 a new secret police named Sazmān-i Ittilā'at va Amniyat-i Keshvar (National Security and Information Organization), soon to become notorious under its acronym SAVAK.²⁸

By helping to return the Shah to power in 1953, and continuing to support him, the U.S. took a major step in its increasing involvement in Iran, seeing in him an ally on the Soviet border and the access to Iranian oil.²⁹

The Shah tightened his censorship of the press, and permitted only two official 'puppet' parties to operate--"the 'government' Millīyūn (Nationalists, known after 1963 as the Īrān Nuvīn Party) and the 'opposition' Mardum (People), also referred to as the 'yes' and 'of course' parties."³⁰

While suppressing opposition, the Shah's relations with the 'ulamā' were relatively harmonious in the years immediately after Muṣaddīq, both finding advantage in closer co-operation.³¹ The Shah courted the conservative majority, such as Burūjirdī and Bihbihanī, for support with the Baghdad Pact, foreign participation with the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) in the 1954 Consortium agreement, and suppression of the Tūdah Party.³² The 'ulamā', by keeping silent--ironically, given their position on foreign encroachment--, sought his support for the anti-Bahā'ī campaign of 1955.³³ The 'ulama', alarmed by what they saw as a growth of communism under Muṣaddīq, also supported the Shah's anti-communist efforts.³⁴ The Shah made some concessions to the 'ulamā' in return, such as an increased emphasis on Islam in secular schools.³⁵

The Shah, shaken by the threat during the Muṣaddīq era, attempted, afterwards, to gain legitimacy by appropriating Islamic symbols and portraying himself as the defender of Islam.³⁶ He viewed himself in a mystical relation with God and above reproach.³⁷ The Shah also associated himself with state-controlled religious institutions--waqfs, the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology at the University of Tehran, and the

Sipah Salar mosque and madrasah in Tehran.³⁸

Clergy-State relations deteriorated in the late 1950's along with the general political climate. Following election rigging for the Majlis in 1960 and 1961, the Shah cancelled the results and dissolved the Majlis, intending to rule by decree. There was a resurgence of the National Front, with covert Tūdah support, in opposition to the Shah's autocracy.³⁹ The 'ulama' joined in protesting his autocracy--though they were not linked with the National Front at this time⁴⁰--as well as plans for land reform and female enfranchisement, outlined in 1962 as part of the Shah's White Revolution.⁴¹

Although any uprisings had generally been readily crushed, there remained a wide-spread discontent among the people, manifesting in workers' strikes, peasant malcontent, and student uprisings. During the student riots in 1963, the police brutally opened fire under orders from Prime Minister Iqbāl.

A new mood of reform started with the beginning of the Kennedy administration in America. Under American pressure, the Shah named Dr. 'Alī Amīnī as Prime Minister and a new relative political freedom began. It was also at this time that the early stages of land reform were begun.

The second National Front began under this new mood. Āyatullāh Ṭāliqānī continued his work with this group as well as forming, along with Bazargan and Dr. Sahabi, an independent but affiliated group, the Freedom Front (Nihzat-i Azādī), with a tougher stance.

Following the Shah's visit to the U.S., Prime Minister Amīnī was suddenly replaced by Asadullāh 'Alam, and the open political era came to an end. The National Front and Freedom Front no longer existed legally.

Throughout the 1960's and 1970's, the Shah's secret service, SAVAK, was becoming increasingly more powerful and its suppression of opposition more ruthless. Torture during interrogation was common, as was trial in secret military courts, resulting usually in imprisonment. There were estimated to be over 10,000 political prisoners by the mid-1970's.⁴² SAVAK's informant network was so pervasive, that there was a general climate of fear and distrust. Suppression was not only political but intellectual and cultural as well--on the press, academics and writers.⁴³

The Shah's power was based on oil wealth, co-operation between the regime and the upper class, repression, and U.S. political, economic, and military support--in the form of weaponry, advisers, and technicians. Lacking a popular base of support, when the above factors began to crumble, so did his régime. The economic crisis of 1973-8 led to widespread discontent, and increasing conflicts of interest between the régime and the upper class saw the latter's support wane. Opposition to the Shah was strengthened by factors such as a growing revolutionary ideology holding out hope for positive change, mass-mobilization through organized networks--most notably the 'ulamā'--, and a political alliance of various

oppositional forces.⁴⁴

A significant factor in the increasing tension was the growing educated class eager for political participation, but with no outlet. The development process awakened the people--through education, the media, and urban migration--to the faults in Iran's political system in comparison to other countries.⁴⁵ However, the lack of effective political mechanisms to express it led to a mounting frustration. The official political activity was a farce, with the Majlis operating but of little consequence since the Shah was the major agent for policy. He attempted to gain support in 1975 by replacing the two-party system with a one-party system, the Rastākhīz (National Resurgence) Party, but this, too, was a failure, due to confusion over its organization and relation to government, and its lack of an effective role in policy and decision making.⁴⁶

Although discontent was widespread among the modern middle class, it lacked an outlet for expression. There was only the one political party, the Rastākhīz, with all newspapers and journalists affiliated to it. With Rastākhīz people in charge of radio, television, and the ministries of information and the arts and culture, censorship was worse than ever.⁴⁷

The Shah began liberalization in February 1977, under pressure from the new Carter administration in the U.S. However, an explosion of long-suppressed demands from the people caused him to revert to repression. In December 1977,⁴⁸ he began an anti-'ulamā' campaign, focusing specifically on Khumaynī. A

published article, condemning Khumaynī, stirred up widespread protests. The violent crackdown by the Shah only increased the hostilities, and Khumaynī responded by calling for more demonstrations. There was a new development, which would gain importance over the following year, as the military began to balk at firing on unarmed protesters.⁴⁹

Despite an attempt to appease the 'ulamā' and bazaaris in May and June of 1978, the cycle of demonstrations and suppression would continue escalating up to the revolution.⁵⁰

The Shah added to the problem by surrounding himself with servile advisers and losing touch with actual conditions, making it difficult to assess the situation and correct things.⁵¹ Unwilling to share power, he failed to build up political support, making himself almost the sole target for the growing hostilities.⁵²

THE WHITE REVOLUTION AND ECONOMIC DISCONTENT

The "White Revolution," portrayed in the West as a great modernizing move by an enlightened monarch, was seen by many in Iran as an "American conspiracy....a step intended to strengthen the bases of despotic government and reinforce the political, cultural, and economic dependence of Iran on world imperialism."⁵³ There was a mix of positive and negative growth during this period--the Shah and the West tending to focus only on the positive. The early 1960's saw general economic depression, with high unemployment and low investment feeding the

general unrest.⁵⁴ Some gains were made in social and economic development, mainly due to high oil revenues--the mainstay of the economy and the Shah's development program. GNP increased by 8 per cent per year in the 1960's, 14.2 per cent from 1972 to 1973, 30.3 per cent from 1973 to 1974, and 42 per cent from 1974-75.⁵⁵ Due primarily to oil, this growth should be treated with caution since "oil represents a large percentage of GDP and therefore the rise in its price implies a rise in physical output that has not in fact occurred."⁵⁶ Per capita income jumped five-fold from the mid-1960's to the mid-1970's,⁵⁷ despite population growth from approximately 27.1 million to 33.6 million.⁵⁸ From 1965 to 1975, industrial output increased an average of 15 per cent per year,⁵⁹ with an increased demand for skilled labour leading to some wage increases of 30-50 per cent.⁶⁰ With an expansion in industry, education and the state bureaucracy, came an expansion of the urban working class and the new middle class.⁶¹ There were gains in literacy, and health and public welfare.⁶²

Despite advances, however, the overall effects of the Shah's development plan were deleterious, contributing to the general discontent which would culminate, ultimately, in the revolution of 1978-79.

The agricultural policies of the White Revolution did little to change unequal land ownership; landless labourers were ignored; and many small producers lost their land to large mechanized 'agribusiness' ventures and state-run farm corporations.⁶³

The industrial and mining portions of the Iranian economy declined from 20.4 per cent in the period 1963-1967 to 16.1 per cent in the period 1973-1977 as resources were subject to more direct exploitation. Those who bought and invested for the state emphasized products requiring little internal labour relative to capital and having substantial export value. From 1961 to 1971, agricultural production for food went from 79 per cent to 50 per cent as priority went to export crops such as cotton, sugar cane, and sugar beets.⁶⁴

Such policies led to the government subsidizing imports of foreign wheat, but not national wheat production. Rather than providing credit for the small producer, or raising prices to encourage domestic production, food was imported and sold at subsidized prices.⁶⁵ Failing to stimulate domestic agricultural production led to increasing rural unemployment and urban migration.⁶⁶ Food self-sufficient until the late 1950's, Iran was coming to depend on massive foreign imports, much of which never made it to those who really needed it since the distribution and price of imported food was controlled by a small government clique. Less than 10 per cent of the population accounted for more than 40 per cent of consumption. Jobs were scarce, except for those lucky enough to get into the state bureaucracy--only 0.6 per cent of the labour force was employed in the production of oil, Iran's major source of revenue.⁶⁷

Massive urban migrations were to provide a large segment of those dissatisfied with the régime and calling for its downfall in

1978.⁶⁸ Driven by rural unemployment and the lure of high-paying jobs in the cities, particularly with the construction boom from 1973-76, they found, instead, severe social dislocation and an unstable economic situation--poor housing, insecure employment, and inflation.⁶⁹

With the four-fold increase in the OPEC oil prices in 1973, the Shah accelerated his development plan, sharply increasing government spending.⁷⁰ This rapid flood of money, coupled with poor planning, had an ultimately destabilizing effect on the economy--high inflation, excessive profits for a small segment of the populace, corruption,⁷¹ and spending on large-scale capital-intensive projects which emphasized foreign technology, investment, and advisers at the expense of small companies and local manpower.⁷² The large projects also contributed to regional disparity by being focused around Tehran, and the foreign manpower fueled nationalist opposition. A poor infrastructure inflated costs,⁷³ and the development of an industrial export sector was hampered by high tariffs and wages, and inefficient production over-pricing Iranian goods.⁷⁴

The gap between rich and poor, widening with the oil boom, contributed substantially to the unrest and the subsequent revolution. It was most apparent in the different living conditions in Tehran--the rich in their lavish villas in the north, and the crude southern shanty towns swollen by rural migrants.⁷⁵

Development began to falter in mid-1976 as decreasing

international demand for Iranian oil reduced the flow of revenue supporting it.⁷⁶ This, and the rising cost of imported goods, led to sharp cutbacks,⁷⁷ widespread shortages, a growing gap between supply and demand, unemployment, and an inflation rate of 30 per cent--mainly hitting the lower and middle classes.⁷⁸ Adding to the dissatisfaction were the widespread corruption--despite the Shah's superficial attempts at anti-corruption campaigns⁷⁹--and the fact that decreasing oil revenues had no effect on the Shah's military expenditures.⁸⁰

The Shah tried to ease the discontent of the lower and middle classes, but only exacerbated the problem. A share divestiture program was introduced in June 1975 as the thirteenth principle of the White Revolution,⁸¹ requiring large companies to sell 49 per cent of their shares to employees or, if that demand was insufficient, a state holding company. The uncertain climate which this measure generated--the perceived threat of state intervention or artificially low government price evaluations--reduced private investment, and the rich transferred large sums of money out of the country--aided by poor exchange controls.⁸² Also, the program applied only to a minority of workers--few of whom actually benefited⁸³--and did not address the more pressing problem of their lack of control over industry; they were not allowed to organize and negotiate on their own behalf, the trade union system was run by the Ministry of Labour and SAVAK.⁸⁴

Another of the Shah's measures at this time aroused discontent--a price-fixing campaign against the bazaar in 1975--

76, designed to curb inflation. During this campaign to check prices in the bazaar, about 8,000 bazaaris were imprisoned and over 20,000 spent periods of exile in the country.⁸⁵ The bazaaris were already upset over the weakening of their position--economic and political--because of the modern commercial sector which was growing under the Shah's reforms--banks, state credit institutions, trading companies, department stores and supermarkets.

Other sources of tension between the bazaaris and the regime included an attempt by the government to control the bazaar by replacing the traditional local merchant organisation and hierarchy with 'guild bureaucrats', a plan by the municipal government of Tehran to build an eight-lane highway through the centre of the bazaar, and plans to reorganise the country's distribution network which involved building a state-run market in Tehran modelled after London's Covent Garden.⁸⁶

It's not surprising, under all of these conditions, that there was a growing number of (illegal) strikes after 1973.⁸⁷

By June of 1978, ten months of recessionary measures by the Amouzigar government had fomented protest, drawing industrial and non-industrial working classes into an increasingly more revolutionary movement.⁸⁸

THE WHITE REVOLUTION AND THE OPPOSITION OF THE 'ulamā'.

The beginning of the Shah's White Revolution was the major catalyst for demonstrations led by the 'ulāma' against the state. Beginning in early 1963, they exploded in violent confrontations with the Shah's forces on June 4-11 in major urban centres such as Tehran and Qum, leaving several thousand dead

before being quelled.⁸⁹

The Shah and foreign press claimed that it was specifically the issues of land reform--threatening the land-owning 'ulamā's assets--and female enfranchisement which provoked a reactionary religious class opposed to modernization.⁹⁰ Similar charges would arise out of the 1978-79 Revolution, of obscurantism on the part of the 'ulamā'.

The 'ulamā' were a large part of the land-owning class,⁹¹ but their opposition was more against the impact of land reform on remaining wagf lands--an important source of clerical funding--than just against the appropriation of their private property.⁹²

Both aspects, however, were considered unconstitutional and contrary to the sharī'ah.⁹³ Interestingly, no mujtahid issued a fatvā against land reform--despite such claims by the government.⁹⁴

On the issue of female enfranchisement, the 'ulamā' were united in their opposition.⁹⁵

Their opposition stands as a function of the position of women in 'traditional' Iran and reflects on the wider question of the treatment of women in Islamic societies.⁹⁶

These two issues undoubtedly contributed, but the 'ulamā's opposition was mainly over the usual complaints of state tyranny and foreign influence and exploitation.⁹⁷ To them, the dissolution of parliament and rule by decree were unconstitutional and an example of 'rule without justice' (zulm),⁹⁸ and the White Revolution designed to promote the Shah's and America's interests.⁹⁹ The White Revolution had been

stimulated by President Kennedy's 'Development Decade'--a program in many Third World areas to strengthen friendly governments.¹⁰⁰

The people had not forgotten that it had been the U.S. which had returned the Shah to power in 1953, and maintained him with money, equipment and advisers.¹⁰¹ The foreign personnel working in Iran--and the cultural influx of American dress, music, and films--were also a visible reminder of foreign encroachment, contributing to a general ideological rejection of the Shah's methods of modernizing, what Jalāl Āl-i Aḥmad called 'Westoxication'.¹⁰²

The Shah served America's strategic interests--economic and security--in the gulf,¹⁰³ and provided a profitable market for U.S. arms.¹⁰⁴

The Shah increased the evidence of his U.S. ties by planning to grant extraterritorial privileges to American advisers and military personnel, by a \$200 million American loan for arms,¹⁰⁵ and by seeming to support other Western--especially U.S.--capitalistic interests.¹⁰⁶ The 'ulamā' also opposed diplomatic, economic, and technical relations between Iran and Israel, "a state hostile to Muslims and Islam."¹⁰⁷

Khumaynī emerged, out of the turmoil in 1963, as the leader of the opposition of the 'ulamā' to the Shah.¹⁰⁸ Refusing to be silenced, he was jailed twice and exiled to Turkey in 1963--moving to Najaf, Iraq, from 1965-1978.

He continued his efforts from his exile in Najaf,¹⁰⁹ however, his exile, the failure of the June uprising, and the

repressive measures of the Shah--imprisonment, torture, exile, and infiltration of the 'ulamā's ranks by SAVAK agents--forced the 'ulamā' into a defensive quiescence.¹¹⁰ Protests broke out somewhat between 1970 and 1972--protesting increasing U.S. economic penetration and the Persepolis celebrations of 2500 years of Iranian monarchy in October 1971, for example.¹¹¹ The Mujāhidīn-i Khalq also began armed activity during this period.¹¹²

From the mid-1960's until the late 1970's, the Shah kept a firm grip on the situation. His increasingly repressive measures were supported by high oil revenues, particularly after 1973 when the price of OPEC oil quadrupled.

The 'ulamā' were a primary target, because he saw them as a key impediment to his modernization process. State control was extended over religious education and waqf properties and revenues.¹¹³ He designed a plan,¹¹⁴ in 1971, to separate religion from politics--restricting religion to the area of personal morality and ritual worship--through the agency of the 'mullāhs of modernization'--the Literacy Corps (Sipāh-i Dānish) (one of the original principles of the White Revolution), and the Religion Corps (Sipāh-i Dīn).¹¹⁵

The Shah also began, during the 1970's, to seek political legitimacy in linking his regime to the pre-Islamic past instead of Islam--celebrating 2500 years of Iranian monarchy at Persepolis in 1971, and replacing the Islamic calendar with a 'Persian' one in 1976.¹¹⁶

20TH CENTURY INSPIRATION, THE VARIOUS FORCES OF OPPOSITION

INDIVIDUALS AND IDEOLOGY

A number of individuals had a prominent place in developing an ideology which contributed to the revolution as well as in guiding its forces to success. The following is a discussion of several, in random order.

Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (c. 1839-96)

One of the most prominent Islamic modernization reformers was Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who played a key role in formulating an Islamic response to the problems of domestic development and Western imperialism.

Born in Afghanistan, he served governments in Afghanistan, Istanbul, Egypt, and Persia--often coming into conflict with a ruler and being expelled. During an exile in Paris, he founded a society, Jam'iyat al-Urwa al-Wuthqa (and a journal of the same name), advocating an Islamic awakening and revolution. His main concern was the weakness, corruption, and disunity of the Islamic world faced with Western imperialism--partly blaming a corrupt leadership for allowing ignorance and superstition to replace reason and enlightenment in guiding society. He worked to synthesize Western science and technology with Islamic thought, and advocated radical reform--if not outright revolution--to right corrupt political-religious patterns in Islam.

Afghānī's ideas reflected the strong influence of Salafiyah thought in his diagnosis of the corruption

and decay of Islamic society, and in his prescription of purification to revitalize the dynamic spirit of Islam to meet the challenge posed by the West.¹¹⁷

Āyatullāh Ruhollāh Khumaynī (d. 1989)

Of primary importance in discussing individuals who contributed significantly to the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 is the charismatic leadership of Āyatollāh Ruhollāh Khumaynī. It was Khumaynī who emerged out of the turmoil in Iran in 1963 as the leader of 'ulamā' opposition to state tyranny and foreign domination¹¹⁸ and the unifying force for the diverse elements of the opposition. He articulated themes which were significant to the success of the revolution and remained steadfast when others were ready to compromise. The founding principles of the Islamic Republic were largely his, and he was the final arbiter on critical issues and among various groups.¹¹⁹

In one of Khumaynī's first books, published in 1945, he attacked the ideas of the anti-clerical intellectual, Ahmad Kasravi, and the autocracy, Westernization, and anti-Islamic measures of Rīzā Shah. He stated that government legislation in Islam must be closely guided by the sharī'ah. Although he did not attack the institution of monarchy--referring to the historical co-operation between the Shahs and the 'ulamā'--, he believed in constitutional limits on the power of the Shah according to the law and the sharī'ah. He supported Āyatullāh Kāshānī and oil nationalization under the National Front government, and criticized Muṣaddīq's request for financial aid from the U.S.

When the Shah paid lip service to Islam from 1953-61, Khomeynī was quiet, like his mentor Burūjirdī. He protested again when the Shah suppressed the Majlis and the Constitution, calling for a return to the Constitution. His focus later shifted from the Constitution to Islam, seeing a greater danger to Islam and nationalism from 'colonialism'.¹²⁰

Khomeynī's reputation as a mujtahid came from his position as professor in Qum and as one of the closest advisers of the marja', Burūjirdī¹²¹--emerging as one of his possible successors after his death in 1961.

Khomeynī's rise to the head of Iran's government stimulated controversy as to his qualifications. Some justification may be found in two key Shī'ī principles. One is the principle of taghlīd where it is the duty of all Shī'a to follow some eminent Shī'ī mujtahid. Which one is up to personal choice, so long as the mujtahid meets certain basic qualifications, but having chosen one, it is necessary to defer to his guidance. The other key principle is part of the method by which a marja'-i taghlīd is chosen, that is, based on his following, his popularity with the people. There is no doubt that as the revolution progressed, Khomeyni did enjoy significant support of the majority of the populace, for whatever reasons.

As Algar points out, his status came more from his strong opposition to the Shah than his erudition,¹²² his having come into direct conflict first in 1962 over proposed changes to electoral laws and the Constitution.¹²³ Protesting openly from

the Fayzīyah madrasah in Qum in 1963, he was arrested twice--triggering popular uprisings.¹²⁴ He was then exiled to Turkey, where he stayed until moving to Najaf, Iraq, from October 1965 until the early fall of 1978. He continued his efforts from there; however, his exile, the failure of the June uprising, and the repressive measures of the Shah forced the 'ulamā' into a defensive quiescence.

Khumaynī became more radical in exile, shifting from the Shī'ī political theory developed since the constitutional movement--legitimizing royal power limited by a constitution--to the original Shī'ī political doctrine of the Imamate. The Shī'ī state was to be divinely guided, through rule by the Imams and their agents, with monarchy being anti-Islamic and illegitimate.

Khumaynī found the Persepolis celebrations an appropriate occasion to attack the institution of monarchy.

Tradition relates that the Prophet said that the title of King of Kings, which is [today] borne by the monarchs of Iran, is the most hated of all titles in the sight of God. Islam is fundamentally opposed to the whole notion of monarchy....Monarchy is one of the most shameful and disgraceful reactionary manifestations.¹²⁵

He lectured on this subject to his students in 1970, and published his views the following year as Vilāyat-i Faqīh, 'Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī' (Rule of the Jurisprudent, 'Islamic Government'). He argued that the 'ulamā' should go from the traditional prescribing of do's and don'ts for believers, and passive waiting for the return of the Hidden Imām, to actively ousting corrupt governments, and replacing them with ones led by

Islamic jurists. In this light, he urged the theological students of Najaf, Qom and Mashhad to incite the people.¹²⁶

Dr. Muṣaddiq (1880-1967), Leader of the National Front

Dr. Muṣaddiq's efforts within Iran, particularly with the nationalization of oil, had an impact throughout the Middle East.¹²⁷ Eventually, growing threats from both inside and outside the country brought about his downfall. Other countries, even socialist ones, joined in sanctions against buying oil from Iran, intensifying the economic pressure. The U.S., with Kermit Roosevelt as their "Field Commander," supported the coup which replaced the Shah on the throne.¹²⁸

The opposition from within "included the court, most general officers, landowners and large businessmen and a growing number of clerical leaders."¹²⁹ Āyatullāh Kāshānī was one of the most notable of those clerics, one of Muṣaddiq's staunchest supporters until they split over their different religious/secular approaches.¹³⁰ Another main component of the internal opposition were the ignorant mobs stirred up by paid trouble makers (called "Chagu Kishan").

The Chagu Kashan mobs are most frequently purchased by rightist and royalist politicians. The mob that appeared from the slums of South Tehran on August 19, 1953, and presented the rightist army generals with victory over Mossadeq were Mullah and Chagu Kashan-Led.¹³¹

Jalāl Āl-i Aḥmad (1923-69)

Jalāl Āl-i Aḥmad was one of the most important influences in

changing intellectual opinion toward Islamic nationalism. Born of a clerical family, he was a teacher, scholar and novelist. A member of the Tūdah party in his youth, he turned to Islam as a political ideology by the early 1960's. He focused on opposition to Western political and economic influence; he blamed imperialism for Iran's failure to keep pace with the West in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the Westernized intelligentsia since the constitutional period for opening the doors. He found it shameful that an 'intellectual' in Iran had become one "who is Western in his habits, is irreligious or pretends to be so, is alien to his own local environment....and in the name of a scientific attitude has a colonialistic attitude." Āl-i Aḥmad's vision of Islam was nationalistic and symbolic, with the Hidden Imām largely a symbol of resistance and the search for justice. Critical of the conservative 'ulamā' in general, he does admit that in their defence of tradition, they were a bastion against colonialism, and he admired Khumaynī in that light.¹³²

Āyatullāh Sayyid Maḥmud Ṭāliqānī (1911-1979)

Ṭāliqānī was one of the leading revolutionary figures of contemporary Iran--held in such respect that the people called him "Father" (Pidar). Taliqani was engaged in political activities most of his life, as a leader of opposition against both Riḏā Shah and Muḥammad Riḏā Shah.

He worked with men like Mudarris and Abū al-Hassan against

Rizā Shah. When Mudarris was arrested and exiled, Ṭāliqānī became his sole link with supporters and family.¹³³ Because of his active participation, he came to be identified with the revolution.

Also an intellectual, he was noted for his philosophical thought. The two best known of his writings are: (Partūvī az Qur'ān, Light From the Qur'an) and (Jihād va shahādat, Holy War and Martyrdom). The influence of these works contributed to the formation of the early Sazmān-i Mujāhidīn- Khalq-i Īran (The People's Mujahidin Organization of Iran, PMOI).

Ṭāliqānī's most prominent role was as a religious leader, with a unique vision of Islam and activism--called Islām-i Mutaḥarrik ("Kinetic Islam").¹³⁴ He believed in "original" Islam, rather than the passivity that had developed, and that Islam was not static, but should be interpreted in the light of present conditions.¹³⁵ Not surprisingly, he found more support among the young than the older, passive 'ulamā'. Although his activities were small scale then, they were significant because he was one of few.¹³⁶ He especially opposed the suppression of the 'ulamā' and traditional values, and the disregard for the constitutional laws.¹³⁷

In prison, he met many oppositional figures, including fifty three who would become the nucleus of the first communist party in Iran (Hizb-i Tūdah). The suffering of those in prison deepened his revolutionary spirit.¹³⁸

Ṭāliqānī supported Muṣaddiq in the nationalization of oil

and against the Shah, yet he remained independent, refusing to be completely absorbed into the national movement. His value was in spreading awareness, organizing opposition, and as a unifying factor (particularly after his final release from prison on October 30, 1978) among the factions--especially lay groups, such as the National Front, and the religious.¹³⁹ He had reconciled nationalism and religion within himself while remaining deeply religious.¹⁴⁰

In his commitment to the opposition, he even gave shelter to members of the Fadā'īyān-i Islām, whose goal he disagreed with, and used his Hidayat Mosque as a headquarters, contributing to causes such as the newly born Freedom Front (Nihzat-i Muqāvimat-i Millī).¹⁴¹

After a five year prison sentence, conditions had changed in Iran. Armed struggle had started, and he turned more to a philosophy of jihād, shahādat, and shahīd (holy war, martyrdom, and martyr).¹⁴² He believed in struggling (jihād) against oppression and injustice by any means, including the sword, to bring an Islamic order. In this, he differed from many 'ulamā', particularly the very conservative, who wanted the status quo.¹⁴³

His views had a great influence on the people--for example, his ideological and philosophical contribution to the Mujāhidīn-i Khalq-i Iran (The People's Mujāhidīn Organization of Iran, PMOI).¹⁴⁴

After the success of the revolution, Tāliqānī was progressively isolated from the new regime. He disagreed with one

man rule, believing in the principle of consultation (shūra) at the heart of Islam and in all activities of life.

No single person could be 'the most learned' in all aspects of religion.... No single Mujtahid could possibly give an answer to all the problems raised by modern life, and...that a council (Shūra-yi Fatwā) should be established....¹⁴⁵

He died September 10, 1979.

Āyatullāh Sayyid Abū-l Qāsim Kāshānī (d. 1962)

One of the most significant religious-revolutionary figures in the recent history of Iran, Kāshānī played an important role in nationalizing the oil industry, and co-operated with Muṣaddiq in the fight to end British influence, although he later became disillusioned and contributed to Muṣaddiq's downfall.¹⁴⁶

Abrahamian states the reasons for his influence.

Kāshānī was the idol of the petite bourgeoisie. As an Āyatullā from a prominent religious family, he appealed to their Islamic convictions. As a fiery opponent of the British whose father had been killed while fighting the English, he satisfied their patriotic instincts. As a Mujtahid who lived on tithes provided by the bazar and who surrounded himself with businessmen, he gratified their mercantilism. And as a traditional politician who opposed Rīzā Shah's absolutism, he encouraged their constitutional aspirations.¹⁴⁷

He was arrested by the British during the war because of his pro-German slant and exiled to Iraq. Upon his return, he worked against Prime Minister Qavam's secularist policies and was again exiled, to Qazvin, Iran. Following an assassination attempt by someone against the Shah in 1949, he was again arrested and exiled to Turkey. On the way, he sought asylum in Lebanon as his plane made a refuelling stop.¹⁴⁸

Kāshānī was invited back by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Shah after he was elected a deputy to the Majlis in new elections to replace the scandal-ridden sixteenth Majlis. After a warm welcome arranged by Dr. Muṣaddiq and the National Front, their active cooperation began, with Kāshānī supporting Muṣaddiq until Muṣaddiq seemed to be taking on too much personal power. The main conflict was over their different religious and secular approaches to government.¹⁴⁹ The conflicts deepened until Kāshānī was actively siding with the Shah against Muṣaddiq, contributing to the coup of 1953.¹⁵⁰

Dr. 'Alī Sharī'atī (1933-77)

The young intelligentsia of the 1970's, although partly anti-clerical, were turning to Islam as the foundation of a political ideology, especially a revolutionary one. The main emphasis was on hostility to the West and on the local economy and culture. Dr. 'Alī Sharī'atī, with his Ershad group, was the main proponent of this new ideology. From a clerical family, he studied sociology in Paris, and lectured briefly at the University of Mashhad in 1964--before being dismissed for political activism--and at the religious centre of Ershad in Tehran from 1969-1973. His major support was among young Iranians and students.¹⁵¹

Contrary to the secular intelligentsia, Sharī'atī envisioned a new state with an Islamic foundation. His vision of Islam was not a regression to earlier models, but a new reformulation of

tradition for a new age. The focus would be a charismatic authority in Imām Alī's image--represented by 'knowledge'--to establish a new order and prepare for the Imām's return. He rejected passive waiting and the 'ulamā's exclusive right to rule during the Occultation--the power to choose the leader resting with the people as a whole, not the 'ulamā', who had become part of the ruling class and isolated. He contrasted Alid Shī'ism as a 'movement' with Safavid Shī'ism as an 'institution'. "Islam was a revolutionary ideology as long as it was a 'movement', but as soon as it turned into an 'institution', it became reified like all institutions become." It had always been, and should be, a movement of the oppressed. His Islam was a form of nationalism that even non-religious intellectuals could support. Though the foundation of a new community, it left unclear how much Islam would shape actual political, legal and social institutions.¹⁵² His radical new interpretation of Islam--not just a personal religion but a powerful revolutionary creed--instilled the duty in all believers to oppose political, economic, and social ills.

OPPOSITION GROUPS

Several organizations with Islamic nationalism as a political ideology, and opposed to Western capitalism and imperialism, emerged in the mid-1960's--Mujāhidīn-i Khalq, National Freedom Movement, Revolutionary movement of the Muslim People, Islamic Movement of Councils, etc. Formed from amongst the educated urban youth, mainly bazaaris, they proposed a new and radical

interpretation of Islam, approaching socialism, with a new Islamic order established by popular councils.¹⁵³

The Mujāhidīn-i Khalq-i Iran (The People's Mujāhidīn Organization of Iran, PMOI)

This group was formed mainly from a radical splinter group of The Liberation Movement of Iran in 1965--by Muhammad Hanifnezhad and eight recent classmates from Tehran University. In their view, uprisings needed certain conditions to succeed: coherent organization and suitable revolutionary administration; the strugglers are professional revolutionaries, struggle being their main activity and profession; and they base themselves on ideological and doctrinally oriented struggles. They emphasized the need to free the oppressed from imperialism--the U.S. being its main representative--and the need for action, with Islam as the framework and the Qur'an as a book of ideology. Their interpretation of the Qur'an in the light of revolution relied heavily on that of Taliqani in Partūvī az Qur'ān.¹⁵⁴

Key members were arrested or executed, creating a leadership vacuum, and Marxist ideology infiltrated. Informants linked Ṭaliqānī's name to the organization, damaging his reputation by falsely connecting him with Marxism. Sentenced to ten years in prison, he was freed by the revolution after only two.¹⁵⁵

In 1975, the central committee adopted Marxism as the true revolutionary creed rather than Islam, splitting the party in two--the centrists being leftist Islamic on the one hand and the

others being Marxist-Leninists. The centrists concentrated on students, the Marxists on workers. Both were active in the Revolution, but refused to disarm on Khumaynī's command. The Islamic group were willing if the people's rights were guaranteed--this demand leading to a clash and then open warfare with the regime in the summer of 1981. The Marxists outright refused to surrender their arms. Seeing the Revolution as merely a step toward a socialist revolution, they had much in common with the Feda'-i Khalq. The Islamic side differed from the new regime mainly in interpretation--preferring a democratic approach to government--and on a number of practical issues.¹⁵⁶

The Fadā'iyān-i Islām

The strongest of the extremist religious-political opposition organizations, this group was formed in 1945 by Muḡtabā-Navāb-Şafavī, who was from a poor but religious family. They were strong fundamentalists, advocated violence and terrorism in pursuit of their goal of a new religious order, and gained widespread support amongst the lower classes. Şafavī was not a Qur'anic scholar, but he did publish one book, Rahnāma-i Haqā'iq (Guide to the Truth), which gives some insight into their goals; Islam is rule, execution, legislation, education and law, with each inseparable from the other. Islam is universalistic--factionalism was condemned--and all-encompassing; there is no-one and no aspect of life which it does not include. Their fanatical views on women--that women are only fit, by virtue of physical

and mental inferiority, for household duties--excluded women from any active participation in this group. They totally rejected anything Western. Among the most notable of their terrorist acts were the murders of Kasravi, a famous writer, in 1946, and General Razm-Arā, the Prime Minister, in 1951.¹⁵⁷

They worked with Kāshānī, at first, in supporting Muṣaddiq against the British, separating from him for a while over differences, before joining him again in opposing Muṣaddiq in 1953. The organization had been seriously weakened confronting Mussadiq and when Kāshānī turned against them, and they were finally destroyed after the royalist coup of August 19, 1953. Ṣafavī and another leader, Tahmāsabī, were arrested and died in custody in 1956--the latter executed, the former shot in an escape attempt.

Fidā'ī-i Khalq

This group adopted its name in 1971, and was formed of three separate groups with origins back to the mid-1960's--mostly from the Tūdah and the Marxist wing of the National Front. Most were from middle class, professional families. They had a history of combat and confrontation, attacking police stations, banks, and American and British embassies under the Shah. They formed links with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine--under George Habash--and sent their top men to train in the Palestinian camps of Lebanon. The party split into two wings in 1975, with the moderates focusing on political action among industrial

workers, and the majority continuing armed confrontation. They took an active part in the Revolution, but went into opposition against the Islamic Republic when their demand for a share in state power was rejected by Khumaynī. 158

The Iran Freedom Movement (or Front) (Nihzat-i Āzādī-i Īrān)

This group was formed by Āyatullāh Ṭāliqānī, Engineer Bazargan, and Dr. Sahabi in 1961, during the period of relative political freedom under Prime Minister Dr. `Alī Amīnī.¹⁵⁹ Independent from, yet affiliated with, the second National Front in its coalition this group took a tougher stance against the Shah. Although it was the principle of the National Front that all strugglers be united under it, Muṣaddiq, from exile, gave his blessings for independent parties acting within it. Ideologically based on Maktab-i Islām-i Mubārīz (School of Islamic Struggle),¹⁶⁰ they intended to bridge the gap between the religious and the modern educated middle classes with an activist view of Shī'ī Islam and the `ulamā's legitimate participation in politics.¹⁶¹ They were a major factor in the formation of the 'religious-radical' alliance in 1978. Their position was similar to that of `Alī Sharī'atī--one of the main ideologues of the revolution of 1978-79.¹⁶²

As we have seen, the opposition movement was made up of a wide diversity of factions, with Khumaynī and his followers as only one segment. He was neither the first, nor the most

predominant ideologist in the early stages of the revolutionary movement. It was only as his popularity sizeably increased after 1963 that he was able gradually to come to dominate the forces of the revolution and turn them towards his own specific goals for the Islamic Republic.

NOTES

¹N.R. Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution & The Islamic Republic, new edn., N.R. Keddie and E. Hooglund eds., (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), p. 2-3.

²Ali-Reza Nobari, ed., Iran Erupts: Independence: News and Analysis of the Iranian National Movement, (Stanford, Calif.: The Iran-America Documentation Group, 1978), pp. i passim. Several studies by westerners deal with the blindness of the American media on the revolution: William Dorman and Ehsan Omeed (pseud), "Reporting Iran the Shah's Way," Columbia Journalism Review, January-February 1979, pp. 27-33; William A. Dorman, "Iranian People v. U.S. News Media: A Case of Libel," Race and Class 21 (1979) :57-66; and Barry Rubin, Paved With Good Intentions: The American Experience and Iran, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), Appendix A, pp. 337-64.

³Edward W. Said, Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), p. 77.

⁴Ibid, p. xi.

⁵Darling, p. 40.

⁶Naraghi, p. 28-29.

⁷For a discussion of the political atmosphere in Iran in the early years of Muḥammad Riẓā Shah's reign, see Ervand Abrahamian, "Factionalism in Iran: Political Groups in the 14th Parliament (1944-46)," Middle Eastern Studies 14 (1978):22-55; and Laurence P. Elwell-Sutton, "Political Parties in Iran, 1941-1948," Middle East Journal 3 (1949):45-62.

⁸Mohammad Hassan Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama in Twentieth Century Iran, with Particular Reference to Ayatullah Haj Sayyid Abul-Qasim Kashani" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1978), pp. 102-3(hereafter cited as Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama").

⁹Naraghi, p. 30.

¹⁰On the Azarbayjani rebellion see, Naraghi, p. 35-36; Cottam, Nationalism, pp. 124-29; Elwell-Sutton, Persian Oil, pp. 114-17; George Lencowski, Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948: A Study in Big Power Rivalry (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949), pp. 286-309; Ramazani, Iran's Foreign Policy, pp. 112-14, 123-53; and Zabih, Communist Movement, pp. 98-122.

¹¹Ervand Abrahamian, "Communism and Communalism in Iran:

The Tudāh and the Firgah-i Dimokrat," International Journal of Middle East Studies 1 (1970), p. 301; S. Zabiḥ, Communist Movement, p. 114, n. 92.

¹²Darling, p. 41; On the linkages between the Tudāh and the Firgah-i Dimokrat-i Azarbayjan (founded in 1945), see Abrahamian, "Communism and Communalism," *passim*. Abrahamian cautions that "the Tudāh and the Firgah-i Dimokrat were not simply two sides of the same coin. On the contrary, they were separated from each other by contrasting social bases, conflicting interests, and, at times, clashing policies." *Ibid.*, p. 315.

¹³Fred Halliday, Iran: Dictatorship and Development (Harmondsworth, Mddx., England: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 227. On the organization of the Tūdah Party in this early period, see also Ervand Abrahamian, "Social Bases of Iranian Politics: The Tudeh Party, 1941-53" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1969), Chapters 7 and 8; and Zabiḥ, Communist Movement, pp. 75-76, 84.

¹⁴Darling, p. 41-42. For a discussion of the Tūdah Party in the period 1951-53, and its ideological conflicts with the National Front, see Abrahamian, "Social Bases," pp. 217-19; and Zabiḥ, Communist Movement, Chapter 5. On the period 1960-61, see Zabiḥ, Communist Movement, pp. 230-39. For a discussion of the Tudāh since it was banned, see Halliday, Iran, pp. 228-35.

¹⁵Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama," p. 110.

¹⁶On Dr. Muṣaddiq's background and political activities, see Cottam, Nationalism, p. 263.

¹⁷For a discussion of the composition of the National Front coalition, see Cottam, Nationalism, pp. 264-68; Younes Parsa Benab, "Political Organizations in Iran: A Historical Review," Review of Iranian Political Economy & History 3 (1979), p. 37; and Zabiḥ, The Mossadegh Era, pp. 49-55.

¹⁸On the return of the strength of the 'ulama' following the abdication of Riṣā Shah, see Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. xvi, 61; and Ferdows, "Religion in Iranian Nationalism," p. 18.

¹⁹Ayatullah Burūjirdī, the sole marja' at the time, was one notable opponent of political activism. A conference on the issue of political activism, in Qum in February 1949, adopted a non-interventionist position, but it was largely ignored. For further discussion, see Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 63-64.

²⁰Millward, "Religious Opposition," p. 51; and Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 64.

²¹Darling, p. 44; Cottam, Nationalism, pp. 154-55; Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 241-42; Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 60-61, 64, 67-69; Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama," Chapters 4-7; and Garoussian, "Ulema and Secularization," pp. 66-81.

²²Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 68-69; Cottam, Nationalism, pp. 151-52; and Garoussian, "Ulema and Secularization," pp. 66-81. The alliance between Kāshānī and the Fidā'īyān-i Islām ended--over ideological differences and their demands to share power--shortly after Muṣaddiq came to power. See Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 69; and Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama," pp. 194-97.

²³Elwell-Sutton, Persian Oil, Chapters 15-22; and Anthony Sampson, The Seven Sisters: The Great Oil Companies and the World They Made (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1975; Coronet Books, 1978), pp. 132-41.

²⁴Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 69; Cottam, Nationalism, pp. 154, 277-80; Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama," Chapter 7; and Ferdows, "Religion in Iranian Nationalism," p. 87.

²⁵Sampson, Seven Sisters, pp. 135-36.

²⁶Darling, p. 45; Helmut Richards, "America's Shah, Shahanshah's Iran," MERIP Reports, no. 40 (September 1975), p. 6 (hereafter cited as Richards, "America's Shah"); Kermit Roosevelt, Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979); and Barry Rubin, Paved with Good Intentions: The American Experience and Iran (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 76-90.

²⁷Ervand Abrahamian, "Iran in Revolution: The Opposition Forces," MERIP Reports, nos. 75-76 (March-April 1979), p. 5; and Richards, "America's Shah," p. 8.

²⁸Abrahamian Iran Between Two Revolutions, p. 419. For further discussion on the creation of SAVAK, see Richard Deacon, The Israeli Secret Service (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1978), pp. 176-77; Halliday, Iran, p. 82; and Saikal, The Rise and Fall of the Shah (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 55 (hereafter cited as Saikal, Rise and Fall).

²⁹Marvin Zonis, The Political Elite of Iran (Princeton: pp. 108-9; and Amin Saikal, Rise and Fall, pp. 51-55.

³⁰Darling, p. 46; Fred Halliday, "The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution," Third World Quarterly 4 (1979), p. 5; Binder, Iran: Political Development in a Changing Society (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), pp. 221-26; and Richards, "America's Shah," pp. 11-16.

- 31Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 90.
- 32Darling, p. 46-47.
- 33Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 76-77 and 88-89; and Fischer, Iran, pp. 186-87.
- 34Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 244; and Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 76.
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- 45Halliday, "Genesis," p. 5.
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⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 66-70.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 71.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 73.

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⁵⁴Fischer, Iran, p. 187; Homa Katouzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran: Despotism and Pseudo-Modernism, 1926-1979 (New York: New York University Press, 1981), pp. 228-31; and Richards, "America's Shah," p. 16.

⁵⁵Fred Halliday, Iran, p. 138.

⁵⁶Halliday, p. 156.

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⁵⁸Halliday, Iran, p. 10.

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⁶³On the land reform program, see Halliday, Iran, Chapter 5; Nikkie R. Keddie, "The Iranian Village Before and After Land Reform," Journal of Contemporary History 3 (1968):69-91; and Helmut Richards, "Land Reform and Agribusiness in Iran," MERIP Reports, no. 43 (December 1975), pp. 12-18.

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⁶⁷Albert, "The Text and Subtexts of the Iranian Revolution," p. 2-4.

⁶⁸Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution, pp. 88-96.

⁶⁹Darling, p. 80; Hooglund, "Rural Participation," pp. 4-6; and Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution, pp. 25, 46-47.

⁷⁰Graham, Iran, p. 19.

⁷¹On the corruption within the Royal family concerning the Pahlavī Foundation, see Graham, Iran, pp. 156-67.

⁷²Keddie, "Economic Policy," pp. 19-22; and Graham, Iran, pp. 119-22.

⁷³Graham, Iran, pp. 87-88; and Halliday, Iran, pp. 162-63.

⁷⁴Darling, p. 80-81; and Halliday, "Genesis," p. 8.

⁷⁵For a statistical analysis of the gap between rich and poor, see Darling, pp. 82, 126-127. On conditions in the shanty towns, see *ibid.*, p. 83; and Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution, pp. 25, 46-56.

⁷⁶Graham, Iran, pp. 97-100.

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⁷⁹Graham, Iran, pp. 143-44; and Halliday, Iran, p. 155.

⁸⁰Graham, Iran, p. 101.

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⁸⁸Hiro, p. 73.

⁸⁹Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 245-48; Fischer, Iran, pp. 187-88; Millward, "Religious Opposition," p. 58; and Zonis, Political Elite, pp. 45 and 63.

⁹⁰Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 246 and 249; Ann K. S. Lambton, "Persia Today," The World Today 17 (1961), p. 82; and Millward, "Religious Opposition," p. 58.

⁹¹Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 96-97; and Ann K. S. Lambton, Landlord and Peasant in Persia: A Study of Land Tenure and Land Revenue Administration, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 126-27, 261.

⁹²Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 95.

⁹³Ibid., p. 95.

⁹⁴Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 91; Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 246; and Keddie, "Roots," p. 229.

⁹⁵Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 63 and 95.

⁹⁶Darling, p. 49-50. For a discussion of Iranian male attitudes concerning women, see Reza Bareheni, The Crowned Cannibals: Writings on Repression in Iran (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), pp. 45-63. On the status of women in Islamic societies, see Lois Beck and Nikki R. Keddie, eds., Women in the Muslim World (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978).

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⁹⁸Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 95; and Lambton, "Marja' Al-Taqlid," pp. 120-21.

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¹⁰⁰Halliday, Iran, pp. 26-27, 253; and Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 10.

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¹⁰⁶Abol-Hassan Banisadr and Paul Vieille, "Iran and the Multinationals," in Iran Erupts (as cited), pp. 24-33; Bahman Nirumand, Iran: The New Imperialism in Action (New York: Monthly Review Press, Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1969). For an opposing view that the extent of foreign influence was exaggerated by the nationalist opposition, see Halliday, Iran, pp. 168, 254, 256-

67.

107Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 246. See also Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 98-99; and Darling, pp. 50-51.

108For further discussion of Khumayni's activities at this time, see ahead pp. 58-60.

109Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 249-53.

110Akhavi, Religion and Politics, p. 159; and Millward, "Religious Opposition," p. 60.

111Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 161-63; and Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 250-53.

112On the ideology of the Mujāhidīn, with their revolutionary interpretation of Islam, see Ervand Abrahamian, "The Guerilla Movement in Iran, 1963-1977," MERIP Reports, no. 86 (March-April 1980), pp. 8-12; Shahram Chubin, "Leftist Forces in Iran," Problems of Communism 29 (1980):15-18; and Halliday, Iran, pp. 236-48 *passim*.

113Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 129-35, 137-43.

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125Ruh Allah Khumayni, Islam and Revolution, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley, Calif.: Mizan Press, 1981), p. 202.

126Shahrugh Akhavi, Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran: Clergy State Relations in the Pahlavi Period (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1980), pp. 164-6. For a discussion of the doctrine of vilayat-i faqih in its historical development and as interpreted and implemented by Khumayni, see below pp. 96-100. For further discussion of Khumayni's position, see Ruh Allah Khumayni, Islam and Revolution; and T.Y. Ismael and J.S. Ismael, Government and Politics in Islam, pp. 86-96.

127Naraghi, p. 53.

128Roosevelt, Countercoup, p. 120.

129Cottam, Nationalism in Iran, p. 283.

130Ibid., p. 215.

131Ibid., pp. 37-38.

132Bashiriyeh, p. 72.

133Naraghi, pp. 6-7.

134Ibid., pp. 1-2.

135Ibid., p. 18.

136Ibid., p. 17.

137Ibid., p. 13.

138Ibid., p. 14.

139Tāliqānī attained such stature because he was one of only a few who had managed such a balanced synthesis of religion and nationalism, without seeming to compromise either.

140Naraghi, p. 58.

- 141Ibid., p. 60.
- 142Ibid., p. 75.
- 143Ibid., Chapter IV, pp. 109-145.
- 144Ibid., pp. 158-159.
- 145Lambton, "Marja' Al-Taqlid," pp. 125-6.
- 146Naraghi, p. 45.
- 147Abrahamian, "Social Bases," p. 139.
- 148Naraghi, pp. 45-46.
- 149Ibid., pp. 46-49.
- 150Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama," p. 286.
- 151Bashiriyeh, p. 70.
- 152Ibid., pp. 70-2. For further discussion of the core features of his doctrine, see T.Y. Ismael and J.S. Ismael, Government and Politics in Islam, pp. 84-86.
- 153Bashiriyeh, p. 73.
- 154Naraghi, pp. 148-161.
- 155Ibid., pp. 174-177.
- 156Hiro, pp. 146-7.
- 157For further discussion on the Fadā'Iyān-i Islām, see Faghfoory, "The Role of the Ulama," pp. 164-203.
- 158For further discussion of the Fidā'ī-i Khalq, see Ervand Abrahamian, "The Guerilla Movement in Iran, 1963-1977," MERIP Reports, No. 86 (March/April, 1980) pp. 3-15.
- 159Abrahamian, "Iran in Revolution," p. 5; Algar, "Oppositional Role," pp. 254-55; and Zonis, Political Elite, pp. 72-77.
- 160Naraghi, pp. 63-64.
- 161On Bazargan's religious and political ideology, see Akhavi, Religion and Politics, pp. 23-24, 110-16.
- 162Darling, p. 52.

CHAPTER III
THE REVOLUTION AND THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

As we have seen, it was largely the poor economic policies of the Shah, oppression, and the perception of increasing foreign encroachment which alienated many segments of the populace. It was this broad cross section of elements--students and intellectuals, the urban working class, the bazaaris, the new middle class (both professional and business), the 'ulamā', and the rural migrants--which was to play such a role in the revolution of 1978-79.

It is clear that the 'ulamā' were only one segment of a broad-based revolutionary movement, and it was only after December 1977 that they came increasingly to assume the leadership. Here, it must be stated that the 'ulamā' were by no means united on the issues of political activism in general and the revolution in particular. Divisions occurred first between those who favoured political activism and those who avoided it, and later between those who supported Khomeynī's interpretation of Islamic government and those who opposed it--for various theoretical and practical reasons.¹

Khomeynī was so successful partly because he developed and used an ideology which appealed to the deprived and oppressed, the populist segment of society who had found an increasing voice in the world of Islam since the revolution.²

Combined with Khomeyni's astute use of Shi'ite ideology and tradition and Iranian nationalism, certain factors and events during the course of the revolution--many deliberately orchestrated by Khomeyni--contributed to its remarkable success, as the following discussion will show.

Khomeyni addressed a message to the military on 6 September 1978, in a move to create a rift between them and the Shah--a crucial tactic for the final success of the Revolution. He thanked them for not firing on the Eid al Fitr marches, on September 4, urged them to stop slaughtering their brothers in the cause of the Shah, reminded them of their faith, and offered his hand in conciliation, encouraging others to do likewise.³

A particularly harsh event in the suppression, which further increased the riots, was the massacre on 'Black Friday', September 8, 1978. The regime received a further blow as the Central Bank announced, on September 18, that 177 prominent Iranians had recently transferred large sums of money out of the country--including thirteen top military officers. This news demoralized the conscripts--50% of the infantry--, who received only \$1 a day. These young conscripts, from all segments of society, were more receptive than professional soldiers to Khomeyni's ideas, and would be the fatal weakness in the army.⁴

By late September and early October the protests had spread to the crucial, state-owned National Iranian Oil Company and fifty major manufacturing and service establishments. Their demands included wage increases, the end of SAVAK and martial

law, and the return of Khumaynī. The Shah, however, had Khumaynī expelled from Iraq, fueling the protests. Despite a few desperate conciliatory moves by the Shah, the confrontation quickened. Khumaynī, in Paris, gave many interviews to the international media, and urged the protests on. The oil industry called an indefinite strike on October 31 at his request, hitting the government at its most crucial point.⁵

The following day, during the demonstrations on the fourteenth anniversary (Iranian calendar) of Khumaynī's expulsion, Āyatollāh Sharīʾatmadārī--the most respected cleric in Iran at that time--made a statement backing Khumaynī's position.⁶

Then, on November 4, after meeting Khumaynī in Paris, Karīm Sanjabi ruled out any possibility of compromise with the Shah.

On November 6, the Shah installed a military government--hoping to halt the unrest--and offered concessions, but nothing stopped the rioting. His hopes for military intervention by the U.S. were disappointed by their announcement, in response to a Soviet warning, that they would not become involved in Iran's internal affairs.⁷

On December 11, Āyatullāh Ṭāleqānī and Karīm Sanjabi led a large demonstration through Tehran to Shahyad Square where they ratified a seventeen-point charter demanding

an end to monarchy, acceptance of Khomeini as the leader, establishment of an Islamic government, rejuvenation of agriculture, social justice for the deprived masses, protection of religious minorities, and the return of all exiles. This event conferred legitimacy on the opposition--an alliance of religious and secular forces--as the genuinely representative government of the Iranian people.⁸

A successful general strike on December 18 strengthened the protesters' determination, and the army began to crumble. With his military administration not working, the Shah tried for one under a leader of the secular opposition, Gholam Hussein Sadiqi of the National Front, but Sadiqi declined when Khomeyni refused his approval. Next he tried Shahpour Bakhtiar, leader of the National Front, who agreed, on December 29, on the unwritten conditions that the Shah would leave immediately on holiday, and act as a constitutional monarch in the future. Bakhtiar was instantly expelled from his party for this. Khomeyni declared any government appointed by the Shah illegal and urged on the riots to his only acceptable goal, the fall of the Shah.⁹

Bakhtiar, who had gained Shari'atmadari's support by January, tried to appease the people with some changes, but to no avail. Khomeyni was busy designing the new system. On January 13, he announced the establishment of the Council of the Islamic Revolution to plan a provisional government which would: convene a constituent assembly to create a constitution for the Islamic Republic, hold elections, and transfer power to the elected representatives.¹⁰ He distinguished between 'good' and 'bad' military officers,¹¹ and had his Islamic Revolutionary Council try to negotiate a covert agreement with the military and others, in an attempt to avoid bloodshed. He combined a warning against a military coup with assurances of no harm to the army upon the Shah's departure. Splitting the officers and courting the ranks proved effective. Even Bakhtiar indirectly recognized Khomeyni's

supremacy by this point, as he dispatched an envoy to Paris seeking Khumaynī's endorsement on the day of the Shah's departure on 'vacation' (January 16). Khumaynī refused, and continued his pressure to neutralize the last two main obstacles, Bakhtiar's government and the royalists in the military. To prevent a possible military coup, Āyatullāh Ṭāleqānī warned, on January 22, that such an action would bring a jihad against the army by the people. The army attempted to block Khumaynī's arrival in Iran, but under popular pressure, they gave in, and Khumaynī returned on February 1. Khumaynī formed the Central Komiteh to co-ordinate all the Revolutionary Komitehs which had been taking over administrative powers as Bakhtiar's government weakened. He announced, on February 3, the drafting of a republican constitution for the people to vote on. A compromise was reached to avoid a confrontation between Khumaynī and Bakhtiar. Bakhtiar agreed not to arrest Khumaynī's provisional government and to call it merely a 'shadowy administration'. Khumaynī agreed to hold off from immediately presenting the draft republican constitution for a referendum, which left the 1906 constitution in nominal existence. Khumaynī appointed Mahdi Bāzargān prime minister of the provisional government on February 5, officially creating a second and competing government.¹²

The military was crumbling as desertions increased and many swore allegiance to Khumaynī. The revolutionaries captured military bases, armouries, and arms factories--distributing the weapons--as well as other government and media structures. The

Military Supreme Council announced on February 11 that it would remain neutral during the crisis "to prevent further bloodshed, to preserve the unity and integrity of the armed forces threatening to split into royalist and Islamic camps, and prevent civil war." This marked the official end to the fighting--in Tehran, which was fully under revolutionary control by February 14; Tabriz was the last to fall on February 16--and February 12 became the official birthday of the new regime. Bāzargān presented his cabinet to Khumaynī on February 13.¹³

As we have seen, a number of factors contributed to the downfall of the Shah. His liberalization campaign had destabilized the country politically and economically. He had alienated all segments of the populace except the top élite--particularly the bazaaris and 'ulamā'. The new educated middle classes resented their exclusion from the decision-making process. The people resented the presence of foreigners, because of their historical experience with foreign incursion. Corruption was rampant among the upper classes and officers, compounding the grievances of the people and the disaffection of the lower ranks, particularly young conscripts whose loyalty was never strong.

The Shah failed to respond adequately to the unrest, not recognizing the need for fair concessions until the demands had become too great to consider. With no real popular support, he was dependent on his repressive agencies--SAVAK, military, and police--to maintain power. Their harshness, and the Shah's

vacillation between autocracy and concessions, only contributed to the unrest. To avoid a military coup against him, the Shah banned meetings of two or more generals and set up a command structure that hampered their co-ordinated action after he had left. Certain concessions crippled SAVAK: the International Commission of Jurists inquiry in 1977, an end to secret trials of political dissidents by military courts, and Sharif-Emāmi's purge of top SAVAK officials in September 1978. These, along with failures by SAVAK to take out of action revolutionary leaders as the movement grew, discredited and demoralized the organization. The Shah was also hindered by a Carter administration divided in their support of his activities.¹⁴

The expulsion of Khumaynī aroused the hostility of the people to the Shah, and their unity behind Khumaynī, and gave Khumaynī international publicity. Khumaynī provided the ideal figurehead for the revolutionary coalition. His pious austere lifestyle aroused the admiration of the people, who were tired of the self-indulgence of the élite, and his uncompromising opposition was inspiring. His goal of the Shah's overthrow appealed to the Islamic leftists, the Mujāhidīn-i Khalq, the Marxist-Leninist Fidā'ī-i Khalq, and later the Tūdah. Seeming to champion all interests, he carefully avoided divisive issues. His shrewd use of Shī'ī history, religious fervor, and Iranian nationalism fed the revolutionary fervor. Khumaynī's tactics disarmed the powerful military threat, by breaking its spirit with martyrdom instead of guerilla action. This appealed to the

martyr complex so prevalent in Shī'ī Iran, and his warning to the soldiers that firing on their brothers and sisters "is just as though you are firing at the Qur'ān", coming from a grand āyatullāh, had a powerful effect.¹⁵

The organization of the 'ulamā', although loose-knit, and the mosques contributed to the success of the revolution. Not easily accessible to control by the Shah, they were effective organizational centers, especially for the Revolutionary Komitehs which played an important part in assuming administrative and police powers. The 'ulamā' had a powerful information network for organizing the mass demonstrations and strikes.

FOUNDING THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

After the downfall of the Shah's régime, it was necessary to replace it with something. The broad-based coalition quickly began to crumble as the factions argued over what that should be. Āyatullāh Khumaynī and his fellow militant 'ulamā' and lay followers wanted an orthodox Islamic government run by 'ulamā'. Lay Islamic radicals such as Mahdī Bazargan and the Liberation Movement wanted something less rigid. Liberal secularists like Karīm Sanjābi and the National Front wanted a social democracy. The Islamic leftists like the Mujāhidīn-i Khalq wanted "an egalitarian Islamic society through fusion of Islam and Marxism." Marxist-Leninists such as the Fadā'ī Khalq and Tūdah saw the Islamic Revolution as merely a step toward a more sweeping socialist revolution. In addition, there were various regional

groupings seeking political autonomy:

...the Kurdish Democratic Party in Kurdish areas; the Cultural and Political Society of the Turkoman People in the Turkoman region; the Islamic Unity Party in Baluchistan and Sistan; and the Cultural, Political, and Tribal Organization of the Arab People in Khuzistan.¹⁶

Khumaynī, however, had no intention of forming a Marxist socialist state or a western style democracy.

As the revolution, the consolidation of power under Khumaynī, and the foundation of the Republic progressed, Khumaynī's vision for the future emerged.

According to Hamid Algar, Islamic government derives not from the interests of a certain class, individual or group, but

represents rather the crystallization of the political ideal of a people who bear a common faith and common outlook, taking an organized form in order to aid the process of intellectual and ideological evolution toward the final goal, i.e., movement toward God.¹⁷

Khumaynī was against reducing Islam to just a system of ritual and worship, seeing that as a corruption of true faith, and a Western ploy to weaken the Muslim world. Being a divine law, Islam must be applied from the top down, to all areas of life. In his opinion, only the Just Faqīh is qualified, in the absence of the Imām, to govern. Khumaynī's scheme is attractive to many Muslims because it is simple and based solely on Islam.¹⁸

Khumaynī seemed to see his role initially as merely the arbiter of major crises, but problems setting up the new system drew him into the center of government, imprinting it with his own style: "militant, firm, persistent and intolerant of opposition." He permitted free expression, but only to those on

the side of Islam. He let Islamic leaders divide into hardline and moderate stances and express their arguments, and then favoured the former. He wanted to purge Iran of all unIslamic influences,¹⁹ with the revolution and the regime under him becoming more absolutist and uncompromising with dissenting opinions.²⁰

The period since the fall of the Shah on February 11, 1979 can be divided into three stages. The first lasted until the taking of the American hostages. This stage saw a coalition government dominated by relatively secular liberals, with an initially secret Revolutionary Council dominated by Khomeynī and other clerics often making the real decisions. The second was increasingly more radical, with the government progressively dominated by Khomeynī and the clerical radicals of the Islamic Republican Party. It ended with the dismissal of the first elected president, Bāni Sadr, in June 1981, after he and the Islamic leftist Mujāhidīn-i Khalq turned against the increasing radical monopoly. The third stage continues from the final break with the religious liberals and leftists, with a slowly decreasing reign of terror and the normalizing of relations with other countries, although arbitrary executions and jailings continued.²¹

The new régime had to deal with a shattered economy and build a new government structure. Khomeynī was the final authority, with state power divided between the Bāzargān government and the Islamic Revolutionary Council under Āyatullāh

Muṭahharī. Day-to-day administration rested with the Bāzargān government, and the formulation of overall policies with the IRC, although in fact things were less clearly defined. A new security force loyal to the government was needed. All weapons had to be collected, which proved difficult, especially from the guerillas.²²

The army was in decay, with morale and discipline declining and desertions continuing. Officers were purged by the mullāhs, weapons purchases and military privileges were cancelled, and a rival force loyal to the revolution was formed on Khumaynī's order--the Islamic Revolutionary Guards (Pāsdarān-i Inqilāb-i Islāmi)--on June 16.²³

A secret Islamic revolutionary court in Tehran, handed out summary executions despite protests at home--from such notables as Bāzargān and Ṭāliqānī--and abroad. Khumaynī later stopped the executions and set guidelines for justice. Khumaynī personally supervised the purging of the top ranks of the military and civil service, replacing them with loyalists, leaving the purging of the lower ranks to the IRC and government. The IRC had a great advantage through exclusive access to SAVAK files, and the exclusive loyalties of Komitehs and courts. Khumaynī openly favoured the IRC, describing the provisional government as 'weak'. The IRC came, therefore, to exercise legislative, executive, and judicial powers, and appointed a committee to produce a draft constitution upon Khumaynī's orders. Khumaynī formed the Mustaz'afān Foundation to consolidate all the assets

of the former élite which had been acquired improperly, to be used for the welfare of the deprived (mustaz'afān). Khomeynī ordered a referendum on creating an 'Islamic Republic'--dismissing any mention of the term 'Democratic' favoured by the Fadā'ī-i Khalq, National Democratic Front, and most regional parties, leading these to boycott the referendum. The regime muted the effect of the boycott by lowering the voting age to sixteen--creating hundreds of thousands of voters out of those who had taken part in the demonstrations--and extending the voting period for two days. Khomeynī's religious status also encouraged votes for the Republic, as to vote otherwise might have been seen to be infidelity. The vote was 98.2% in favour of the Islamic Republic.²⁴

The formation of the Majlis in the period between May and July--bringing the transitional Islamic Revolutionary Council to an end--found it eventually dominated by the Islamic Republican Party, further tightening the grip of the Khomeynī régime.²⁵

The outbreak of the Gulf war--Iraq invaded on September 22--had a unifying effect on the country--in defense against an outside threat--and helped to consolidate the power of the radicals. They exploited the war, using it against their opponents and to broaden support for the theocracy--helping to desecularize society. Although Iranians became tired of the war after about 1982, especially with Iran moving more from 'defender' to 'aggressor', the dissatisfaction was not a serious threat to the régime.²⁶

THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND THE PRINCIPLE OF Vilāyat-i Faqīh

With the revolution and a new Islamic order, there was a need for a new constitution. The 1906 constitution had always existed on paper but not in practice, and it provided for a monarchy now to be abolished. Also, it was seen to be a flawed and misbegotten relic, "reflecting the needs and aspirations of another age, and based largely upon foreign--especially Belgian--models."²⁷ What was desired now was a distinctively Islamic constitution.

The new Constitution provided for leadership by a faqīh "possessing the necessary qualifications and recognized as leader by the people" in accordance with the saying, "The conduct of affairs is to be in the hands of those who are learned concerning God and are trustworthy guardians of that which He has permitted and that which He has forbidden."²⁸ Such leadership would keep government in line with Islam.

Khumaynī's political theory of vilāyat-i faqīh was not wholly original; a number of religious theorists had dealt with the issue of governance by the 'ulamā', at various times throughout the history of Shī'ism.

This doctrine, in rudimentary form, was in use by Ḥusayn, the grandson of the Prophet.

In these letters Husayn adequately explains the concept of walaya, which means that God has bestowed upon the family of the Prophet special honour and qualities, thereby making them the ideal rulers, and that through their presence on earth His grace is disseminated.²⁹

Ḥusayn declared that the right to rule is exclusive to the family of the Prophet. This right would then fall to the Imāms, who are divinely inspired.

The doctrine of vilāyat-i faqīh in its present form developed within the Usuli context of Ithnā'asharī Shī'ism. Appearing in the 13th century, out of the need to solve recurrent juristic problems in the administration of justice, it developed into a detailed juristic theory including the all-embracing power of the Imām by the 19th century. Mulla Aḥmad Nārāqi played a major role in formulating--on the authority of traditions, ijmā' and 'aql--the obscure idea of vilāyat-i faqīh into a doctrine in which the mujtahid assumes the role, with full power, of the Imām. His doctrine was later challenged by Shaykh-i Ansāri, modified by Mīrzā-i Nā'inī, and revived by Āyatullāh Khumaynī.³⁰

In the early sixties, a group of leading 'ulamā' held regular discussions to define a general Shī'ī political theory, and procedures for raising an Āyatullāh to become marja' al-taqlīd. Among these were Āyatullāhs Beheshti, Muṭahharī, and Ṭāliqānī. Some wanted a council of 'ulamā' to replace the office of marja'. Allamah Muḥammad Tabatabā'i argued for the principle of vilāyat and an Islamic state. Beheshti went further, arguing for the necessity of either forcing the government to obey Islamic law or overthrowing one that was deviant.³¹

Although Khumaynī sought to validate his ideas in the light of reason, as well as the traditions of the Imāms, they were in fact a new twist from 'ulamā' practices since at least 1500 and

the traditions of the Imāms. The basis of his approach is in line with the Uṣūlī school followed by most of the 'ulamā'. They hold that the 'ulamā' have the authority to deduce laws from the principles of Islam, as opposed to the Akhbārī school--dominant in the early Qajar period--which held that all binding regulations are embodied in the Traditions of the Prophet and the Imāms. But Khumaynī reinterprets some traditions to legitimize his theory of political rule by the faqīh. The faqīh is the sole holder of political authority in the absence of the Imām. He also rejects the Shī'ī practice of taqīyah, dissimulation of belief in times of danger from hostile governments.³²

This doctrine was outlined by Khumaynī in one of his first books Kāshf al-Asrār in 1945, his treatise al-Ijtihād wa't-Taqlīd in 1950--although monarchy was still acceptable to him then³³--, and in his lectures at Najaf in 1969.³⁴ His main argument is that there should be no distinction between the temporal and the religious spheres in Islam. The jurist is not just to understand and interpret the Sharī'ah, but also to implement the law. The political life of the state is the most important aspect of Islam, and the faqīh is the sole holder of legitimate authority in the absence of the Imām. His role is the same as the Prophet and Imāms, to be the trustee over the community of believers, not legislating but only implementing divine laws as embodied in the Qur'ān and Traditions. This is a rejection of the position of the constitutionalist 'ulamā' like Nā'īnī who accepted temporal power in the form of a limited monarchy.³⁵

This concept was one of the most important points introduced into the final text of the new constitution approved in November 1979, called "the keystone of the new political structure, ensuring that the Republic will be Islamic in substance and daily functioning as well as designation."³⁶

Although Article Two of the supplementary laws of 1907 had provided for a committee of high-ranking scholars to ensure that all legislation passed by the Majlis would be in line with Islam, it was never implemented. The principle of *vilāyat-i faqīh* in the new constitution was intended to resolve that issue.

Āyatullāh Khomeynī, in his declaration of January 12, 1979, had announced the formation of the Council of the Islamic Revolution. One of the duties of the transitional revolutionary government was to form a constituent assembly (*majlis-i mu'āssisān*) of elected representatives to approve the new constitution.³⁷

The draft constitution of April 1979 did not contain the doctrine of *Vilāyat-i Faqīh* (Rule of the Faqīh), because it had aroused too much controversy, but even then the draft met much resistance. Many clerics opposed the direct intervention of the 'ulamā' in the day-to-day affairs of government which the draft called for. Ethnic leaders demanded greater powers for non-Persian speaking areas.³⁸

A draft constitution, consisting of 151 articles, was presented in June and became the subject of wide debate and suggestions for changes from both within and outside of Iran.

There was interest in its wider applicability beyond Iran's borders.³⁹ This draft also failed to please critics, and so the doctrine of Vilāyat-i Faqīh was left out of discussions until such time as the country was more stable. When the new Assembly of Experts met in August to discuss the constitution, it was this draft minus the doctrine which they studied. During the course of the deliberations, the assembly--dominated by the IRP--introduced and adopted the doctrine of Vilāyat-i Faqīh.⁴⁰

In a move intended to speed amendment of the constitution and the formation of new political institutions, the broad constituent assembly originally proposed by Khumaynī was replaced by an Assembly of Experts. Elections for it were held on August 3. The Assembly then examined the draft constitution and made revisions based on the proposals of various groups of the people. The Constitution delineated the political, economic, social, and cultural institutions and relations of the new Islamic Republic.

By the time of the elections, Khumaynists had candidates ready from their own political party--the Islamic Republican Party--and were raising support for them in their own newspaper--the Jumhūri-i Islāmi (Islamic Republic).⁴¹

The constitution won an overwhelming majority--99.5%--on December 2-3, 1979. Containing 175 principles, it included the doctrine of Vilāyat-i Faqīh, but conceded the demand of the mostly Sunnī Kurds, Baluchs and Arabs that non-Shī'ī sects have equal status with the Ithnā Asharī Shī'ī. There was a compromise on allowing regional languages in the media and schools, and on

the decentralization of political power. It offered a multi-tiered system of government, but failed to meet the main demand of ethnic minorities, for directly elected provincial assemblies.⁴²

Khumaynī's next move also helped to consolidate his faction's dominance. He took control, by late September, of the oil industry, the country's primary source of revenue--including foreign exchange. This step, together with the Mustaz'afān Foundation--which was becoming an economic giant on the assets of the former élite--and the nationalization measure of June-July gave the régime considerable economic power.⁴³

Relations appeared to be healing between Iran and the U.S., until the Carter administration allowed the Shah into the U.S. for medical treatment--seeming to confirm Khumaynī's fears that they might try to reinstall the Shah. He urged the students to attack U.S. and Israeli interests, to force the extradition of the Shah for trial. This led to the takeover of the American embassy and the hostage crisis, on November 4, 1979.⁴⁴

The confrontation with the U.S. gave new energy to the Revolution--an outside enemy to unite the nation and strengthen the radicals at the expense of the moderates. It boosted Khumaynī's anti-imperialist status--weakening the appeal of the leftists--and boosted support for his initiatives. He used this situation for the referendum on the constitution on December 1, but voter turnout was hampered by Sharī'atmadārī's refusal--abstaining from voting--to support it. Sharī'atmadārī objected to

Principle 110, giving the Leader the power to oust the popularly elected president, seeing this as just another form of monarchy--with national sovereignty subordinate to Vilāyat-i Faqīh.⁴⁵

OPPOSITION TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

Although the revolutionary coalition presented a somewhat united front on the overthrow of the Shah, they were far from united on their goals once that was accomplished. As the radical clerical faction under Khomeynī moved to consolidate their hold and implement their vision of an Islamic Republic, various other parties of the coalition rapidly fell away in opposition.

In light of the question posed at the beginning of this thesis to what extent this was an 'Islamic' revolution and to what extent 'Khomeynī's' revolution, there is no doubt that the revolution had an Islamic face, that Islamic ideology and religiosity played a major role in its success and in the founding of the Republic. The analysis so far has shown, however, that Islam was not the only factor, and perhaps not even the predominant one, especially in the early stages of the revolutionary movement. Closer examination may show also that the 'ulamā' have not made up one monolithic body of support for the revolution and the Islamic Republic. In fact, there has been much opposition to Khomeynī's vision of government. It would be more accurate to conclude that it was not an 'Islamic' revolution per se so much as a revolution given unity partly by Islamic ideology, sentiment, and the organizational efforts of certain

'ulamā', and then captured by one faction under the leadership of a member of the 'ulamā', Āyatullāh Khumaynī.

There was a division amongst the 'ulamā' after the revolution, mainly over Khumaynī's interpretation of vilāyat-i faqīh. One side viewed his interpretation--that clerics should exercise executive power--as clerical rule. Preferring the looser visāyat-i fūqaha, 'general supervision of affairs by the clergy'--the original intent of article two of the supplementary fundamental laws of 1906-7--they would accept vilāyat-i faqīh only during extreme turmoil, and until a new government is installed. The other side supported vilāyat-i faqīh, as leadership, by a single cleric or a committee of 'ulamā', with executive power.⁴⁶

The factionalism of the 'ulamā' over Khumaynī's government can be differentiated along class lines. Most of the new clerical elite were of lower class origins--their status elevated by assuming power--whereas many of the most senior 'ulamā' refrained from political activity after the revolution. Born before 1920 and having prestigious family origins, they were ambivalent towards the Republic, and the principle of vilāyat-i faqīh in particular.⁴⁷

One notable opponent after the Revolution was Sharīʿatmadārī, who allowed for the 'ulamā''s direct intervention in government in only two possible instances: if parliament tries to enact a law contravening the Sharīʿah and when there is no available leader to establish order. Khumaynī viewed opposition to the

Revolution and the new government as apostasy, but Shari'atmadārī believed peaceful criticism or opposition should not be punished. He voted for the Islamic Republic, but he objected to the wording of the referendum and opposed including the doctrine of Vilāyat-i Faqīh in the constitution, calling it contentious, subject to varying interpretations.⁴⁸

Shari'atmadārī's refusal to endorse the constitution on December 1 found him and Khumaynī in definite opposition. This led to a series of clashes between their respective supporters until Khumaynī triumphed by mid January, ending one of the most serious threats to the régime.

That Khumaynī did not enjoy the unanimous support of the people, even shortly after the revolution, may be seen in the fact that election returns for the Assembly of Experts were delayed in several areas because voters were harassed by "various counterrevolutionary forces."⁴⁹

Within a year and a half of Khumaynī's return, the revolution had its problems: oil revenues were low, with inflation and unemployment high, and many Iranians--especially the Kurds and leftists--had become alienated and openly rebelled against the government.⁵⁰

A Kurdish delegation, in March 1979, presented their demands to Khumaynī, who rejected them, sparking clashes and the Kurdish boycott of the referendum for an Islamic Republic. Mediation attempts, by such notables as Āyatollāh Ṭāleghānī, failed and the army began to attack the Kurdish towns in August. Though the army

was successful in taking the towns, the resistance moved into the mountains and countryside.⁵¹ Similar demands and rebellions came from the Turkoman area, Baluchistan-Sistan, and the Arabs in Khuzistan.⁵²

Under such pressures, the government instituted limited autonomy for minorities in December 1979, but under the surface, little had changed. Provincial borders, ethnically irrelevant, were unchanged, with the Kurds scattered over several provinces of mixed population. With the Kurds unwilling to accept this program, and the government unwilling to modify it, the tension and sporadic fighting would continue in the following years.⁵³

When Khumaynī rejected the Fedā'ī-i's demand for a share in state power, they joined the opposition. Under Mustapha Madani, they adopted the Kurdish slogan 'Autonomy for Kurds, Democracy for Iran', and boycotted the referendum. With increasing government pressure, hundreds left to join the Kurdish guerilla movement in Kurdistan. Clashes occurred, beginning on August 7, 1979, between Islamic Revolutionary Guards, attempting to enforce the two month old press law, and members of the National Democratic Front, Fedā'ī-i and Mujāhidīn. The IRG triumphed--with the Fedā'ī-i, Mujāhidīn, and Tūdah all expelled from their head offices--and established itself as an effective internal security force. Forty-one opposition papers--including those of the NDF, Tūdah, Fedā'ī-i, and Mujāhidīn--were banned on August 20. Newspapers, radio and television were now firmly under government control.⁵⁴

The leftists were hampered by their comparative lack of popular support in relation to that of the 'ulamā'. Persecuted and suppressed under the Shah, their solutions to social injustice had never become as widely known or popular as those of 'ulamā' such as Kāshānī, Ṭāliqānī, and Khumaynī.⁵⁵ The power and efficiency of SAVAK had kept other forces of opposition in Iran weak, whereas the 'ulamā' had a center of operations outside the country where they could not be reached,⁵⁶ as well as their loose but effective organizational network to co-ordinate opposition.

In April 1980, the régime began a massive campaign against the left, especially their only remaining open forum--the universities. They succeeded, with the help of gangs of Hezbollāhis and the pasdars (Guards), in totally suppressing the left--by closing the universities after violent clashes with students. The large numbers of poor migrants and local lower classes made up a powerful army, and increasingly filled the ranks of the pasdars and Komitehs in suppressing opposition.⁵⁷

One of the few groups which has had a strong enough organization in Iran to pose any appreciable threat to the regime in the future is the left Islamic Mujāhidīn-i Khalq, under Mas'ūd Rajavi. The Mujāhidīn began counter-terrorism against the IRP, after attacks on Bānī Sadr and the Mujāhidīn in June, 1981, and continued their guerilla warfare to date, with occasional striking successes.⁵⁸ The Mujāhidīn represent a non-'ulamā' trend towards a radical or socialist interpretation of Shī'ism, similar to the thought of 'Alī Sharī'atī.⁵⁹

One segment of the Iranian populace which deserves special mention because of their unique position is the women of Iran. Women participated on a massive scale throughout the revolution, an unprecedented fact in the Muslim world. Their reasons for demonstrating were similar to those of the other forces of opposition. But most, having experienced a relative freedom under the Shah, were not thinking of a return to the traditional status of Muslim women restricted by discriminatory laws. The promise envisioned by the revolutionary movement was betrayed to some extent subsequently, especially in the economic turmoil and the trampling of democratic rights.⁶⁰

....the general government policy in Iran has been aimed at limitation of women's active participation in those areas secondary to the Islamic preference of motherhood and household management. Within the context of the "proper" role of women, the government has launched extensive and long-term socialization and education programs through a complete overhaul of the content of all elementary and secondary textbooks; sexual segregation of teachers and students; establishment of Islamic dress codes for both female students and teachers; and encouragement of peer pressure for absolute compliance with those codes of behavior and belief systems. Hence the earlier views of Khomeini, and not those he expressed during the revolution or those of Sharī'atī, have essentially triumphed for the present.⁶¹

Women's movements, before the revolution, were not independent feminist movements demanding women's rights, but largely parts of other political movements. Events during and since, however, have stimulated independent women's movements, recognizing the need to organize and actively pursue their demands of human rights and equality.⁶²

Under the Pahlavīs, there had been three significant

initiatives: the 1935 ban of the chādor, the 1963 decree giving women the vote and the right to hold public office, and the 1967 Family Protection Law--providing legal obstacles to men's unilateral privilege of multiple marriages and of ending a marriage at will. An education bill in 1911 had already established some guidelines for training teachers, both men and women. Following their unveiling, new educational opportunities opened to women. Even though the unveiling was opposed by many women, who returned to wearing it after the Shah left, the opportunities in education and social mobility were accepted as permanent by urban women. The Tūdah party had always supported women's rights, emphasizing equal and free education and employment opportunities. The White Revolution took a major step in granting the vote to women. Although the revolution later cancelled the Family Protection Law and brought back the chādor, claiming these changes had been Western and unIslamic, women kept the vote. The continuous increase in literacy rates for women over the years had held the most promise for changing sex stereotypes, which is the greatest hindrance to equality for women.⁶³ The revolution dealt a blow to women's educational advances.

Muḥammad Rizā Shah's regime had expropriated most channels of public expression under state control, including the issue of the emancipation of women. For this reason, and the fact that militant women were caught up in the opposition movement against the Shah, there was little of an independent women's movement

then.⁶⁴

The revolution had a great impact on Iranian women, although in divergent ways. Upper class women generally saw it as a big threat to their privileged position and left the country. Working class women hoped for better opportunity through the revolution under a more just regime. This class had generally always worn the chādor and had been too preoccupied with day-to-day survival in traditional roles to have questioned them. They were relatively untouched by modernization and comfortable with the course of the revolution. It was mainly among the middle and lower middle class women that there was an ideological division. Older women, aside from bazaaris and religious families, tended to favour a moderate and pro-Western opposition to the Shah--like Bakhtiar. Younger women, however, tended to support either Sharī'atī--the majority--or the Marxists. Sharī'atī's portrayal of Fātima, the perfect Muslim woman, as a valued participant in political activism and strengthening of Islam, rather than just good wife, mother, and daughter, was very appealing.⁶⁵

Women's active participation in the revolution had been encouraged, but afterwards they were encouraged to submit to an ideology that put them back into a weak subservient position. Many--especially the left, and educated professionals--were not content to resume a traditional limited role, and they began a new post-revolutionary women's movement.⁶⁶

Until his position was secure after the revolution, Khumaynī had shrewdly avoided sensitive issues that would have shaken the

coalition that was sweeping him to power. At that point, his regime began a campaign of repression against women's rights,⁶⁷ while claiming that it was a return to "true" Islam and women's proper and protected place within it.

Just prior to International Women's Day on March 8, 1979, Khomeyni gutted the Family Protection Law of 1967/75, banned co-education, and ruled that women employees of government ministries must dress according to Islamic standards--that is, wear a veil. This set off four days of protest marches by women, until Khomeyni softened his ruling at Taleqani's urging, saying the veil was desirable not compulsory.⁶⁸ Ironically, many young women took to wearing the hejab, as a sign of their militancy, a new feminism against male exploitation.⁶⁹ In the following months, as the position of the women's movement was eroded--many losing their jobs over the veil issue--the regime reinstituted its restrictive measures, and by the middle of 1980, the women's movement was defeated.⁷⁰

The revolution seems to have returned women to traditional roles, however, there has been a movement since the revolution, to analyze women's rights according to a reinterpretation of the Qur'an.⁷¹ Some Islamic thinkers within Iran are critical of certain restrictive measures for women--such as in education, their role in society, and the veil--seeing them as corruptions of true Islam, and impediments to women's proper role.⁷²

The revolution created some opportunity for the mingling of the sexes to perhaps develop egalitarian attitudes, fighting and

demonstrating side by side--in the revolution and in political activist groups. This may alter attitudes toward mate selection--de-emphasizing wealth, and lowering the age gap for marriage as it takes less time to acquire an acceptable level of wealth. The revolution strengthened the family structure as well as the traditional status and role of women, led to segregation of schools and sex role socialization, and lowered women's status according to Islamic teachings that they are somehow inferior and unfit for certain occupations. Economic hardship in the country also decreased their employment opportunities.⁷³

NOTES

¹Nikki Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, p. 6.

²Ibid., pp. 9-10.

³Khumayni, Islam and Revolution, pp. 234-6.

⁴Hiro, pp. 78-79.

⁵Ibid., pp. 79-80.

⁶Michael Leeden and William Lewis, Debacle: The American Failure in Iran (New York: Knopf, 1981), p. 153.

⁷Hiro, pp. 82-83.

⁸Ibid., pp. 85.

⁹Ibid., pp. 85-86.

¹⁰Khumayni, Islam and Revolution, pp. 246-7.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 247-8.

¹²Hiro, pp. 89-91.

¹³Ibid., pp. 91-94.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 96-97.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 98-100.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 103.

¹⁷Algar, Constitution, p. 18.

¹⁸Hiro, pp. 116-17.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 124.

²⁰Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, p. 9.

²¹Ibid., p. 11.

²²Hiro, p. 104.

²³Daniel Pipes, "A Border Adrift: Origins of the Conflict," in The Iran-Iraq War, ed. Shirin Tahir-Kheli and Shaheen Ayubi

(New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 3. For further discussion of the decline of the military following the Revolution, see Hiro, pp. 153-7.

²⁴Hiro, pp. 106-108.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 157-63.

²⁶Eric Hooglund, "Iran 1980-85: Political and Economic Trends," in The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, pp. 17-5.

²⁷Algar, Constitution, p. 8.

²⁸Ibid., p. 21.

²⁹Jafri, pp. 179-180.

³⁰Kazemi-Moussavi, abstract.

³¹Bashiriyeh, pp. 64-5.

³²Bashiriyeh, pp. 61-2, 79. See also Khumayni, Vilayat-i Faqih, 'Hukumat-i Islami' (The Rule of the Jurisprudent, 'Islamic Government'), new edn., (Tehran: 1357), especially pp. 74-80, 201-2.

³³Kazemi-Moussavi, pp. 126-8.

³⁴Ruh Allah Khumayni, Islam and Revolution.

³⁵Bashiriyeh, pp. 62-3. For further discussion of the doctrine of Vilāyat-i Faqīh, see Khumayni, Vilāyat-i Faqīh, 'Hukumat-i Islāmī' (The Rule of the Jurisprudent, 'Islamic Government'); and Ahmad Kazemi-Moussavi, "The Development of the Doctrine of Vilayat-i Faqih: The Role of Mulla Ahmad Naraqi (1185/1770-1245/1830)," M.A. thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1983.

³⁶Algar, Constitution, p.10.

³⁷Ibid., p.8.

³⁸Hiro, p. 115.

³⁹Algar, Constitution, p. 9.

⁴⁰Hiro, pp. 115-16.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 109.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 120-3. For further discussion of the

constitution, see Algar, Constitution.

⁴³Hiro, pp. 131-2.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 133-4.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 138-9.

⁴⁶For a discussion of various 'ulamā' in each camp, see S. Akhavi, "Clerical Politics in Iran Since 1979," in The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, pp. 59-68. For discussion of the dissent within the IRP, and other issues, see also N.R. Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁷Eric Hooglund, "Social Origins of the Revolutionary Clergy," in The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, pp. 82-3.

⁴⁸Hiro, pp. 117-18.

⁴⁹Algar, Constitution, p. 9.

⁵⁰Pipes, "A Border Adrift: Origins of the Conflict," p. 3.

⁵¹Nikki R. Keddie, "The Minorities Question in Iran," in The Iran-Iraq War, p. 99.

⁵²Hiro, pp. 112-13.

⁵³Keddie, "The Minorities Question in Iran," p. 99.

⁵⁴Hiro, pp. 128-9.

⁵⁵Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, p. 8.

⁵⁶Darling, p. 29; Ann K. S. Lambton, "Quis Custodiet Custodes: Some Reflections on the Persian Theory of Government (Conclusion)," Studia Islamica 6 (1956), p. 145; and Algar, "Oppositional Role," p. 249.

⁵⁷F. Azari, "The Post-Revolutionary Women's Movement in Iran," Women of Iran: The Conflict with Fundamentalist Islam, ed. F. Azari, (London: Ithaca Press, 1983), pp. 202-3.

⁵⁸N.R. Keddie, Introduction to The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, p. 12.

⁵⁹N.R. Keddie, "Is Shi'ism Revolutionary?" in The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, pp. 122-3. On the Mujahidin challenge, see Hiro, pp. 186-221.

⁶⁰F. Azari, "Islam's Appeal to Women in Iran: Illusions and Reality," Women of Iran: The Conflict with Fundamentalist Islam, p. 1.

⁶¹A. Ferdows, "Shariati and Khomeini on Women," in The Iranian Revolution and the Islamic Republic, p. 137.

⁶²For a discussion of the historical development of women's movements in Iran, see S. Bahar, "A Historical Background to the Women's Movement in Iran," Women of Iran: The Conflict with Fundamentalist Islam, pp. 170-189. On the women's movement since the revolution, see F. Azari, "The Post-Revolutionary Women's Movement in Iran," Women of Iran, pp. 190-225.

⁶³Gholam-Reza Vatandoust, "The Status of Iranian Women During the Pahlavi Regime," Women and the Family in Iran, ed. Asghar Fathi (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), pp. 107-30.

⁶⁴Azari, "The Post-Revolutionary Women's Movement in Iran," p. 191.

⁶⁵Azari, "Islam's Appeal to the Women in Iran," pp. 65-6.

⁶⁶Azari, "The Post-Revolutionary Women's Movement in Iran," p. 192. For an analysis of the women's movement in Iran, particularly in the early part of the twentieth century, see Eliz Sanasarian, "Characteristics of Women's Movement in Iran," Women and the Family in Iran, pp. 86-106.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 68; and Azari, "The Post-Revolutionary Women's Movement in Iran," pp. 190-225.

⁶⁸Ramy Nima, The Wrath of Allah: Islamic Revolution and Reaction in Iran (London: Pluto Press, 1983), pp. 91-92.

⁶⁹On the significance of the veil for Iranian women, see Azari, "Islam's Appeal to Women in Iran," pp. 43-57, 67.

⁷⁰Nima, pp. 92-93.

⁷¹Adele K. Ferdows, "Women in Ithna Ashari Shi'i Islam," Women and the Family in Iran, p. 34. For a discussion of Islam's position on women and its development, see F. Azari, "Islam's Appeal to Women in Iran," pp. 2-10. On Āyatullāh Mutāhhari's post-revolutionary Islamic ideology of women, see Ibid, pp. 17-21. Shari'ati was perhaps the most influential formative force on Iranian thought. On the impact of his thought on women, see Ibid, pp. 28-36.

⁷²Carol Regan, "Ahmad Kasravi's Views on the Role of Women in Iranian Society as Expressed in Our Sisters and Daughters,"

Women and the Family in Iran, pp. 60-76.

⁷³Jacquiline Rudolph Toubia, "Effects of the Islamic Revolution on Women and the Family in Iran," Women and the Family in Iran, pp. 131-47.

CONCLUSION

There has been widespread discontent in Iran on a number of issues in the years since the revolution: the form of government, food shortages, unemployment, inflation, declining production, jailings, beatings, executions, suppression of disapproved political activity, restrictions on women after a period of relative freedom, armed struggles by ethnic minorities for autonomy, exodus of trained individuals, closure of universities, and the persecution of Baha'is. However, the government's relative egalitarianism, measures for the poor, and Islamic claims have kept it popular amongst a large percentage of the people. Khomeyni's leadership and the Islamic Republic itself proved to be strong and enduring, even after his death.

As we have seen, while the Iranian Revolution of 1978-9 did not initially begin as an 'Islamic' revolution per se, Islam did play a major role in the process and in its success, providing effective inspiration in ideology and religiosity, as well as organization--through the mosques, the information network of the 'ulamā', and the leadership of certain key members of the 'ulamā'.

In the same light, the Āyatullāh Khomeyni, for all of his early political activities, did not rise to prominence as the figurehead and then leader of the revolution until after 1963. Through his astute use of Islamic ideology, history, and nationalism, and certain fortuitous events, he was able to

capture the forces of the revolution and, riding a wave of popularity, establish his own vision of SHĪ'Ī Islamic government.

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